The Challenge Of Youth

Alfred E. Stearns

THE CHALLENGE OF YOUTH

The pure, the bright, the beautiful,
That stirr'd our hearts in youth,
The impulse to a wordless prayer,
The dreams of love and truth,
The longings after something lost,
The spirit's yearning cry,
The strivings after better hopes,—
These things can never die.
—*All the Year Round*—"*Imperishable.*"

The Challenge of Youth

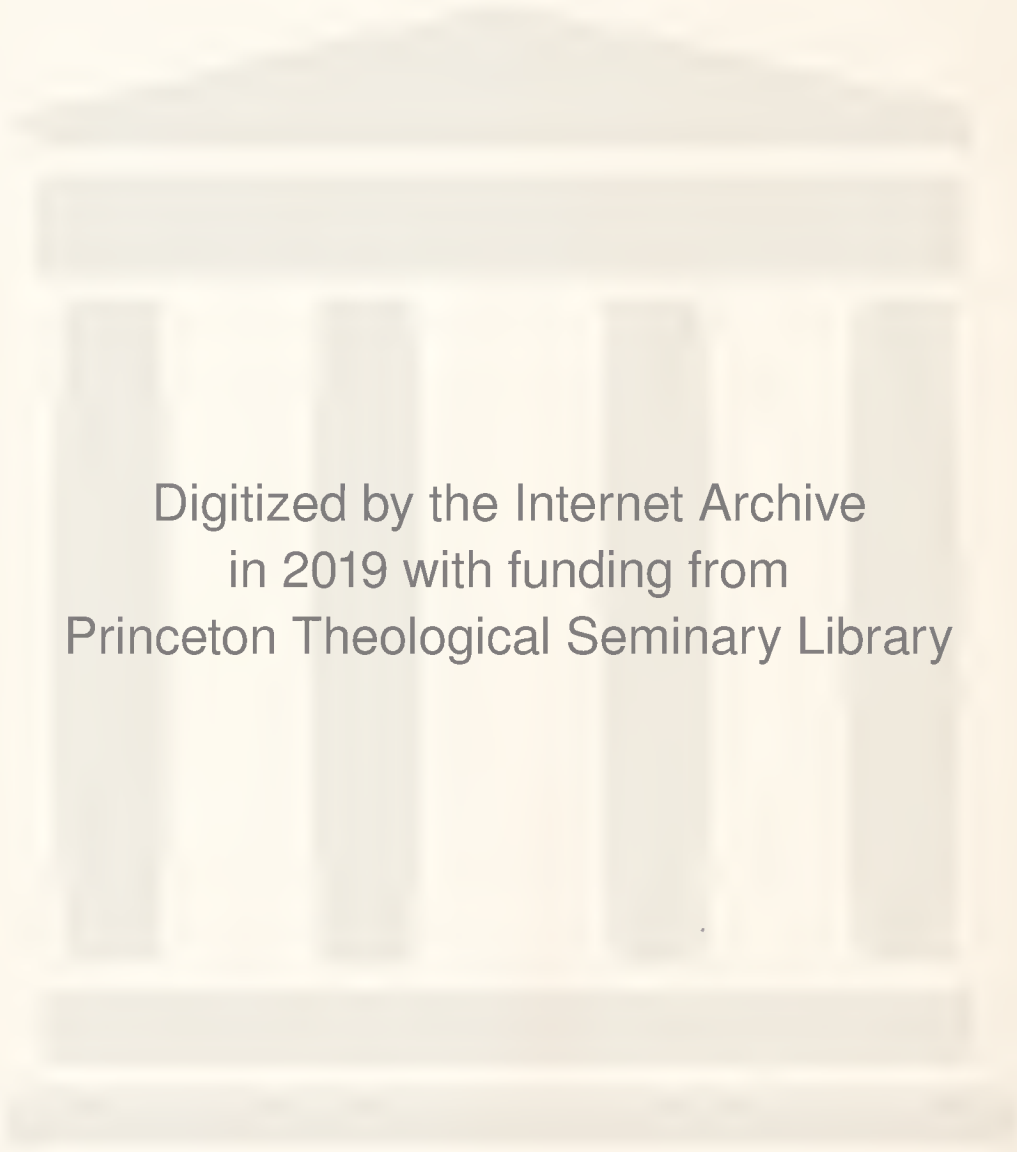
By
ALFRED E. STEARNS
Principal of Phillips-Andover Academy

W. A. WILDE COMPANY
BOSTON CHICAGO

The Challenge of Youth

Made in the U. S. A.

To the Old Boys,—My Constant Teachers



INTRODUCTION

YOUTH is always interesting. No subject, commonly discussed, commands wider or keener attention. And this is natural; and for several reasons.

We have all of us been young ourselves and, however much we may strive to conceal it, the pictures that memory paints of the days of our boyhood and girlhood are gripping and alluring, and generally the happiest we know. To enter fully into the spirit of youth, to grapple once more with its problems, to share in its hopes, its aspirations, and even its disappointments,—all this brings a thrill of its own and lays hold on our hearts. The feeling is hard to define. But it is there and it is very real.

Again; most of us of an older generation have children of our own or, at least, a deep interest in the children of our friends. Their problems are

constantly in our thoughts. Their future is very vital to us. In the new and somewhat changed conditions under which youth is forced to fight its upward way we are a bit perplexed as to the part which we should play. The old standards do not seem to fit. The old rules will not always hold. Many of the most helpful agencies of former days have been swept away. We need help; and we turn eagerly to any who by experience or position seem likely to offer any helpful clue to the solution of our baffling problem.

And finally, we have heavy stakes in this younger generation so soon to take our places on life's great stage. We are all building for the future. Our tasks will never be completed as we would wish to have them. Others must carry on our work and carry it to the higher levels our vision has pictured for it. And these others are the youth of the present day. No wonder then that these boys and girls are of such tremendous interest to us all.

If youth has always been interesting to its elders it is doubly so to-day. Youth has been acting of late in ways that are strange and hard for us to comprehend. These actions have distressed and annoyed; and we have been free with our criticisms and complaints. But our criticisms have seldom been constructive and our complaints have not always been fair. And youth, responding normally to the conditions with which it finds itself surrounded, as youth has always done, has sensed the injustice of our self-righteous attitude, has resented our interference, and has left us more helpless than before. For youth did not create these conditions. Youth found them ready-made. The responsibility for their existence rests squarely upon us of older and supposedly wiser years.

The seeming blindness of the older generation to this responsibility is hard to understand. Yet that responsibility is clear and grave and easily sensed by those who will pause and ponder.

The excitement and selfishness of a materialistic age have rendered us indifferent to the needs of and our duties to others. The awakening must come soon or it will come too late. Conditions which threaten the welfare of society and the stability of the nation will not be altered by our petulant protests; they can and must be changed by earnest and unselfish effort. For the sake of the fathers, the mothers, and the citizens of to-morrow the obligation which is plainly ours must be assumed, and now.

A fairly long and intimate contact with youth is my excuse for attempting to point out in this volume wherein we have erred in our dealings with our boys and girls and the course we are bound to pursue if we are sincere in our desire to aid them in attaining manhood and womanhood that shall be strong and self-controlled and that shall enable them in the years just ahead to carry on successfully our unfinished tasks. Youth has far more at stake than we have; and youth will

not knowingly hurl itself to destruction. Youth asks for a fair field and a fair chance. That much, at least, it is our duty and our privilege to supply.

CONTENTS

PART ONE

THE DUAL NATURE OF YOUTH

"This truth within thy mind rehearse,
That in a boundless universe
Is boundless better, boundless worse."

—*Tennyson "The Two Voices."*

PART ONE

THE DUAL NATURE OF YOUTH

IT is impossible for any one to understand or to deal intelligently with the problems of our boys and girls without holding clearly in mind the dual nature of youth. Those of us of an older generation are apt to forget the conflicts of our younger days, the warring elements within that waged ceaseless and strenuous battle for mastery. The schoolmaster and the teacher, however, who deal year after year with the younger generation, cannot possibly forget. Day by day and hour by hour they witness in the lives and actions of those about them the scenes and struggles of their own childhood. Reminded constantly in this way of the problems of their own youth, they are enabled to enter with keener appreciation into the problems of those with whom

they deal. With the memory of their own experiences ever vividly before them, the advice and suggestions which they are able to offer have at least the merit of being based on intelligence rather than theory.

Youth is definitely the period of vision. The old Hebrew prophet who wrote, "Your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams" uttered an eternal truth. And the dreams of old age bring their satisfactions or regrets just in so far as those spiritual visions of youth have been realized or not in the maturer years of manhood.

At the opening of a school year a father presented himself with his son. He was an exceptionally able and successful lawyer from a western city, and at the time was serving as attorney for one of the great transcontinental railway systems. At the first morning chapel service of the term he had taken a seat in the visitors' gallery. As I was leaving the pulpit at the close of the brief

religious exercise I noticed the man making his way up the aisle. He came forward and extended his hand. To my surprise I noted very evident traces of tears on his face. Something had clearly moved him deeply. He spoke with very genuine emotion. "Mr. Stearns," he said, "you can see that I have been making something of a fool of myself this morning. But I am not sorry," he added quickly. "The fact is," he continued, "I have had one of the great experiences of my life this morning, and I want to tell you about it. I'm not much on this church business; in fact, I don't think I have been inside a church for many years, though I was brought up in an old-fashioned Christian New England home and know better. But when I sat in the gallery this morning, and saw those five hundred heads bow as one man at the beginning of your prayer, something gripped me inside and I cried like a baby. And I'm not ashamed of it either," he went on; "that experience has been a great lesson

to me, and I am not going to forget it. Hereafter, while my boy remains in school, I mean to get to every chapel exercise I can possibly attend."

He was true to his word, and for the next three years it was no uncommon thing to find him in the chapel gallery at the morning exercise. And always he would greet me at its close with the same warm expression of appreciation of what that earlier experience had meant in his life. Occasionally he would telegraph me from his western home, and in some such words as these: "Have an important law case in New York next week; will be at chapel Saturday morning." And when Saturday morning came he would be on hand as agreed.

Two graduates of the school had returned to attend the twenty-fifth anniversary celebration of their class. Both had attained positions of unusual prominence in business and professional life. One was known to be worth millions; the

other had held important public offices. They had devoted an afternoon to wandering about the countryside and revisiting the old and cherished scenes of schoolboy days. Towards evening they returned to the campus and paused for a few moments under the shadows of the familiar elms. For some time neither spoke. At length the successful business man broke the silence. "Jim," he said with almost resentful impulsiveness, "we fellows in the big business world aren't *living*. We're not really living; and those of us who have had school days like ours know it."

What was it that brought the tears to the eyes of that successful lawyer at the mere sight of the bowed heads of five hundred boys, and wrung from a prosperous business man, as the memories of school days crowded fast upon him, the frank admission that in spite of material wealth life to him had been in a very real sense a failure? A schoolmaster living constantly with youth can answer. It was the dreams of old age carrying

memory back to the days of youth and vision, and the consciousness that those high and spiritual visions had not been fully realized in the later years. And such dreams, when once awakened, bring always only bitter regrets.

"Across the fields of yesterday
He sometimes comes to me,
A little lad just back from play—
The lad I used to be.

"And yet he smiles so wistfully
Once he has crept within,
I wonder if he hopes to see
The man I might have been."

Prompted by such visions to fight for the attainment of a high goal, youth battles ever with the physical temptations that spring from within and the lure of a material and pleasure-loving world without. Small wonder then that it so often fails. All credit to it when it wins.

The Apostle Paul, always a boy at heart, has expressed for all ages the eternal spirit of youth.

His words are those which consciously or unconsciously ever spring from youthful hearts: "When I would do good evil is present with me. The good that I would, I do not, and the evil which I would not, that I do. I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."

This is youth,—struggling, aspiring, yielding, overcoming,—succumbing one moment to the ruthless attacks of physical temptation, answering the next the clear and compelling challenge of spiritual vision; making a fool of himself one day and a man of himself the next; stooping unexpectedly to deeds that shame him and win our pity and contempt, rising again to heights of spiritual grandeur that the rest of us can never hope to reach; reacting in startling and yet perfectly normal ways to the influences which for the moment surround him; wresting from the

stern and inescapable struggles of those early years whatever character is later to be his.

All of us, in a measure, are potential "Dr. Jekylls" and "Mr. Hydes," but never more intensely so than in the days of our youth. Almost every day of a schoolmaster's life supplies convincing illustrations of this. Let me give a recent one out of my own experience.

A moving-picture house, situated in close proximity to the campus of Yale University, offered as a special attraction a film based upon a book of that modern variety which has gained such wide popularity in recent years because of its daring and its willingness to cater to the weaker side of human nature by trampling on the decencies of life and flaunting the base and abnormal in human relationships. With a clear understanding of the nature of youth and its sensitiveness to the lower appeal, the management had widely advertised among the student body the film in question and its special features.

Boy-like, the students had responded to this appeal. They had flocked in large numbers to witness the film, just as you and I would have done in the days of our youth had such films existed and such questionable pastimes attained the degree of respectability that they now enjoy.

Among the boys in the audience this Sunday afternoon were two young fellows, well known to me, for they had been members of my school. They had slipped into gallery seats and were quietly watching the picture. Suddenly smoke was seen rising on the stage. The cry of " Fire " rang through the theatre, and almost at the same moment flames leaped through the flimsy scenery. In sudden panic the crowd jumped to its feet and rushed madly for the exits.

At the first cry of " Fire " the two young fellows in the gallery had made a hasty flight and stood in safety on the landing of the fire escape just outside the hall. Here for a moment they paused. They glanced back, and their eyes gazed

on a scene of indescribable confusion and horror. The crowd, which only a moment before had been quietly seated, enjoying to the full the picture as it was unfolded before their eyes, had suddenly been transformed into a frantic, struggling mob, seeking only safety and life. As the boys gazed they saw helpless women borne down before the onrushing mob, and young children trampled under foot, in some cases, to their death.

For only a second those boys stood there, stunned by the scene which met their eyes. But in that scene came the challenge to their spiritual natures, the real manhood within, and without a moment's further hesitation, those brave fellows, who only a few minutes before had yielded to the weaker impulse, turned and fought their way back into the pit of death from which they had just escaped. Once inside, they took their positions at the two sides of the fire-escape door. With almost superhuman strength they forced the struggling crowd to open an aisle through

which women and children could pass to safety. They reached down and picked helpless ones from under trampling feet and passed them to waiting hands outside. They lifted children over the heads of those who surrounded them, and fairly tossed them to other boys beyond the door.

Finally, some of those who had been denied exit by these brave youths locked arms and rushed them, determined to force their way out. One of the boys was knocked out of the door and down the fire escape, receiving serious injuries which confined him for some time to the hospital. The other managed to jump aside and still maintain his position. As he fought on heroically, the flames which had now engulfed the entire theatre, set fire to his clothes and singed his face and hands. At last, when nothing further could be done, and the crowd which jammed the doorway made escape through that exit impossible, this brave lad made his way down through the auditorium to the main doorway and stumbled

out on to the street, still conscious but hardly recognizable. Eager friends rushed him to the college hospital where everything humanly possible was done to save his life. For three days he lay there suffering but clear in mind. Knowing that death hovered only a few hours away, he would look into the face of his weeping mother and say with a ring of triumph in his voice, "Don't cry, Mother; I have no regrets." And then he would add with evident pride, "Anyway, Mother, I think I was the last to leave the theatre alive."

I believe it would be impossible to find an incident illustrating so clearly as does this one the dual nature of youth and its delicate sensitiveness to the particular influences and conditions with which, for the moment, it chances to be surrounded. The baser appeal had had its innings, but the spiritual appeal following so closely had won. Those boys, in their superb heroism, had proved the eternal truth of the saying of the

Master Himself, "He who loses his life shall save it"; and Allen Keith, in those last moments of heroic sacrifice, had met the highest test of spiritual manhood and Christian discipleship. And Allen Keith had "no regrets."

It is these constant and tremendous contrasts that make youth so intensely interesting. And it is the recognition of these that has prompted Christian civilization to render freely its support and encouragement to every worthy aim and high endeavor, and to protect and restrain to the full limit of its power when weaker and baser impulses assail and temptations threaten to undermine and destroy. It has framed laws to aid in holding sinister temptation in check. It has evolved customs and traditions that have sought to make evil odious and virtue sublime. It has thrown its protecting mantle about youth in the days of instability when protection is needed. It has pointed the way to the nobler and more satisfying life of self-control, when the challenging

vision of that higher life was clear but the strength to attain it insufficient.

Through the passing centuries civilization has built up these safeguards and supports. Indeed, this is one of the distinctive characteristics of that civilization we call Christian. If we are losing or weakening these to-day, we must needs face the future with apprehension.

Remembering always, then, this dual nature of youth, let us examine the agencies which civilization has developed to aid in this eternal fight for virile and self-controlled manhood and womanhood. Let us note, too, honestly and without prejudice, the extent to which these agencies have been weakened or swept aside during recent years, and the character of such influences as have supplanted them.

PART TWO

THE HOME IN CIVILIZATION

"Humanity, at present, in this nation, is deteriorating. It has a long way to go, but once really under way it will make the journey at a speed as high as that of some of the details of the modern life which have been responsible for the downhill tendency.

"Roomier houses, better discipline for children in them and the schools, custodial care for those who may through parenthood increase the number of unfit. The world should have great conferences on these matters. They are more important than the subjects wrangled over at Versailles."

—Dr. Max G. Schlapp, Criminologist.

PART TWO

THE HOME IN CIVILIZATION

OF all the agencies that have contributed to the upbuilding of western civilization none has exercised a greater or more steadying influence than has the home. The extent of that influence, especially in our American life, cannot be exaggerated. The home is the foundation of it all. On it rests whatever is of value or permanent in civic and economic life.

The changes that have come over the American home in recent years are plain enough. To one who recognizes their true significance they are startling. But it is not easy to discuss them and to make their meaning clear; for, after all, the home is not merely a building with roof and walls in which the family resides, but rather an atmosphere, an influence, intangible but sacred and very real.

The breakdown of our American home life has been a popular theme of discussion everywhere. But I doubt whether any one better than a schoolmaster can appreciate the extent of that breakdown or its sinister influence on the plastic lives of to-morrow's citizens. Yesterday's home was a home of moral standards and spiritual ideals, professed at least, and in the main supported. Parents ruled supreme, and their will, based on the experience of the passing years, was law to their fortunate children. Service was gladly rendered and sacrifices willingly made, that the younger generation might profit in the days to come. Discipline, without which vigorous manhood and womanhood are impossible, was freely administered when the occasion required. Mindful always of the future welfare of the younger generation, parents did not hesitate to face the momentary frown and tear and to estimate them at their true worth.

The home so prominent to-day is of a different

type. City life, with its hotels, apartments, and flats, has exerted a deadening influence upon it; but it has been even more dangerously undermined by the pronounced change in the attitude of parents themselves. Parents sometimes reside in the modern home on their way to and from the pressing duties of business and professional life and the alluring appeals of club and society; but the old atmosphere is lacking; the service rendered by the older generation is largely for self, and real sacrifice is hard to find. Whatever atmosphere exists is chiefly the creation of the younger generation, which rules pretty much as it wills. We must search altogether too far for that type of home and its accompanying environment which, through the passing years, has built up all that is best and finest in our American life.

Of course, the home has always been and must always be what parents make it; and if the younger generation is now in control, it is only

because parents have refused to accept the divinely appointed trust that is properly theirs.

The schoolmaster who deals constantly with modern parents of varying types is more and more impressed with the inherent values that exist in youth. The wonder is that youth has done so well, facing so often a heavy handicap.

Even before they have been seen parents will pretty clearly identify and classify themselves through the attitude and reactions of their offspring. Careless or earnest, ignorant or intelligent, selfish or high-minded, superficial or sane, erratic or balanced, they are generally revealed by a study of their children. Never, perhaps, is that revelation clearer or more sudden than when trouble arises and merited discipline threatens. Under such conditions they will regularly be found to belong to one of three groups.

First, there is the parent who unhesitatingly, and with every force at command, seeks to avert the threatened blow. These are the most com-

mon. The extremes to which resort is made under such conditions would be only ludicrous if they were not so tragic. Anything to save the family from what is felt to be disgrace. Anything to protect from temporary discomfort the erring child. Parents have a way of appearing at headquarters on such occasions, though, until the blow threatens, the schoolmaster might believe that they did not even exist. If they lack an intellectual and cultural background, and have obtained unusual and perhaps quick success in the acquiring of material wealth, they will sometimes produce a lawyer, whose duty it evidently is to create an impression and stage an effect. What they are really seeking to do is to prevent that one thing which unstable youth needs more than anything else in the world, and at just this time, if weaknesses are to be overcome and self-reliant manhood achieved. Herein lies the tragedy of it all.

Any schoolmaster can relate countless incidents

in support of my contention. There are several which always stand out vividly in my memory, and that will serve to illustrate my point.

A few years ago a boy was dismissed from school for a flagrant offence. He had presented a telegram signed by his mother, in which it was clearly stated that his father, who was ill, had been ordered South by his doctor for his health, that he must see the boy on immediate business before leaving home, and that an excuse should consequently be secured from me in order to make the visit and the interview possible. The request was promptly granted, and the boy left for his home. He returned at the proper time, made known his presence, and the matter was dismissed from my thoughts. It was revived only by accident a month or two later, when I had occasion to write the father, calling attention to the boy's delinquencies in his studies. My letter brought a reply from Florida, in which it was stated that the writer had been in Florida since

October, and hence had had no chance to see or discuss matters with his boy, but that he would return in the early spring. He promised to write and use his influence in supporting our contention that the young man should exert himself more earnestly in the performance of his school duties, and he begged us to use our best influences in the meantime to prevent disaster. As the visit home had occurred in January, it was evident that there was something wrong. An interview with the boy promptly brought out the facts. The telegram had actually been sent by the mother, —it had even been carried to the telegraph office by the sister,—but, instead of an interview with a disabled father, the real purpose of the visit was a coming-out party of a young lady in whom the boy and his family were exceptionally interested. The boy's dismissal naturally followed.

No acknowledgment even was received of my letter stating what had occurred, and the grounds for the school's action. Late in the following

summer, however, the indulgent mother suddenly awoke to a realization of the fact that her boy would not be able to gain admission to his chosen college without a letter of honorable dismissal from his last school. Not daring to trust her precious errand to the medium of a letter, and deeming it inadvisable to notify me in advance of the intent of her visit, the mother made three trips to Andover before she was successful in finding me at home at the close of my summer vacation. I shall never forget the interview. She was a prominent and wealthy society woman in one of our large eastern cities. She swept into my house one evening just as I had finished my dinner. One glance convinced me that she had prepared herself with care, both outwardly and inwardly, for an important occasion. That she was a wonderful actress was early apparent. Her first greeting, however, as I entered the room was enough to put me on my guard.

Gazing rather dramatically into my eyes, she

exclaimed with fervor, "Now that I have looked into your eyes, I know that my prayers are to be answered." Being somewhat unaware of the nature of those prayers, I was placed in an embarrassing position; but I was not long kept in ignorance.

In the course of a three-hour interview she proved her wonderful dramatic ability. In turn she was gushing, friendly, pious, threatening, and abusive. She had only one purpose, and that was to secure from me the letter which would enable her son to enter college. With mingled feelings of amusement, apprehension, and surprise, I watched and listened, interjecting as I could such sentiments as I thought the occasion required. Finally, I felt it necessary to bring matters to a head.

"Madam," I said with feeling, "please don't let me misunderstand you or misinterpret your position. Do you really mean that you wish me to go to the desk yonder and write a letter which

will enable your boy to enter college when you know and I know and he knows that every word of that letter is a deliberate lie?"

She drew herself up with great dignity, and with scathing sarcasm replied, "I suppose then that I stand in the presence of the only *perfect* man."

I assured her promptly and with vigor that I made no claims to that distinction, that my record was full of flaws, but that she was asking of me the impossible, and that it was useless for us to argue the point further.

With a still greater and more tragic show of injured dignity, she rose from her seat, and, with sweeping irony, launched her last attack. (It should be noted that the incident occurred at the time a former occupant of the White House was somewhat in the lime-light.)

"Do you know," she said with chilling emphasis, "the first time I ever saw you was out on the football field last fall. My son pointed

you out to me as you crossed the field. I remarked to him then that you reminded me of President Wilson." She paused a moment to allow this thrust to sink home. "But," she added with biting sarcasm, "I never supposed I should live to see the day when I would discover that you *were like* Mr. Wilson."

To this day I am wondering whether the good lady was a Republican or a Democrat.

Needless to say, the boy involved, facing in life's struggle such an unfair handicap as this, had not a fighting chance for manhood, save by the interference of Providence. A boy under these conditions can scarcely hope for anything better than the life of a human derelict.

I recall another and very similar experience. An irate father whose son had been dismissed for misusing an excuse granted him to visit a supposedly dying grandmother, and who had taken advantage of the unexpected postponement of this event to attend an intercollegiate football

match, stood in my office attended by a supporting lawyer. At the close of a strenuous and stormy interview, he leaned over my desk, shook his fist in my face, and fairly hissed, "G—d—n you, I'll get you yet."

This incident has always had a peculiar interest for me because of later developments. It was not many months after this that the erring boy, who possessed qualities which would unquestionably have made a worth-while man of him had they been given reasonable chances for development, was asked by his own mates in college to withdraw for violation of regulations established by the undergraduates themselves.

Parents will even go to further extremes than those mentioned above in their blind desire to ignore patent facts and conceal truths which are unpleasant to them.

A student was dismissed from school for leaving his room without permission during the late evening hours. He had heard that his house-

master had been called out of town, and he had decided to make a night of it himself. An excuse to visit the library from eight to ten in the evening had regularly been granted him earlier in the day. Returning to his room before the time had expired, he had made his plans and taken his departure. The instructor, coming in a little later, noticed a paper on the boy's door and examined it. It was a note signed by the occupant of the room and read as follows: "Returned at 9:55; have gone to bed." The instructor pulled out his watch. It was then 9:30. The discrepancy was a bit surprising and disconcerting. Further examination revealed the absence of the boy, and the presence in his bed of a hastily constructed dummy. The house-master's long vigil was rewarded in the early morning hours when he saw the figure of the boy emerging from the shadows and watched it disappear through the window of a ground-floor room. The boy was promptly dismissed. The letter relating the facts

to the father brought forth a somewhat unusual and instructive reply. Here it is:

"In regard to his leaving his room during the study hours, it was a minor offence, but, of course, deserving of punishment; but on the note on his door is where you make your mistake. You, like all professors, judge boys by outward appearances, without knowing anything of the inner boy himself. He is undoubtedly heedless, careless, and thoughtless, and it never entered his head that he was writing a lie until you told him of it."

And then adds the father rather naïvely:

"He has never told me a lie in his sixteen years of life."

How could he?

The unfortunate element in situations like these is the impression that they leave on youthful minds. But the essential thing after all is the attempt to ward off just punishment when punishment is the only possible thing that can correct. Not only is the value of merited discipline, so often the deciding factor in moulding waver-

ing youth into stable manhood, denied, but the real evils of wrongdoing are forever concealed, and the youngster faces life with no clear sense of values and too many times handicapped beyond redemption.

Then there are the parents who cannot agree. Differences in opinions, methods, and policies have ever prevailed; peace and concord have never shown their heads, and the development of rugged character is impossible. Such conditions breed restlessness and deceit, for in nature's own way from the days of infancy the child seems to sense the character of the atmosphere about him, and, with almost devilish instinct, plays these parents one against the other; and sad to say he always wins.

In one year of my experience three boys deliberately ran away from school. The incidents were unusual. They set me thinking. It happended that one of the offenders was a son of an extremely wealthy man. The father claimed

with a good deal of feeling that the boy would never have done this foolish thing if it had not been for the father's prominence in the financial and social world, the craving for notoriety which would be thus satisfied, and the conviction that the father in the end would assuredly interfere and restore the old connection. In this case I happened to know the facts, and I knew that the father was wrong. Indeed, my sympathy was all with the boy, as it has been ever since.

This knowledge prompted an investigation of the home conditions involved in the other two cases. The results were illuminating. In all three cases parental disagreement was manifiest. In the first case mentioned there had been recent and open divorce; in the other two, separations. In all cases the boys had been denied what every child born in a Christian civilization has a right to demand—a home and all that a home in its truest sense signifies. Between warring parents these youngsters had been mere shuttlecocks,

human playthings as it were, shunted first to the influence of one, then to the other, according to the dictates of the law and the whims of their parents. It was interesting to note also that they represented all classes of the social scale; for, in addition to the boy whose family boasted untold wealth and social position, there was the boy from the family of moderate means, and the boy who, without any help from home, was at the time working his way through school.

These cases may seem a bit extreme, but they only serve to emphasize the unchanging truth that where discord between parents prevails, the greater the disagreements the smaller the chance for the innocent victims of parental war.

Sometimes the tragedy of such situations is for the moment concealed by the comic element which is almost always present. The schoolmaster who deals with parents is bound to develop, if he did not possess it originally, a sense of humor. If this were not so, the strain would perhaps be too

great for human nature to bear, for where the average individual deals intimately with a score or less of parents the schoolmaster deals with hundreds.

A schoolmaster friend of mine relates an incident which illustrates my point. Here again a boy had failed to meet his school responsibilities, and had been asked to withdraw. As usual the parents appeared and the customary battle began. As not infrequently happens, the mother was the aggressor, but the father, who sat quietly by, apparently accustomed to preserve his silence when his wife had once taken the floor, gave clear evidence of his determination to support his spouse in her claims, and at any cost. The headmaster, long accustomed to conflicts of this kind, had decided that he could deal with the mother, but he was a bit puzzled and troubled as he noted the threatening silence of her husband. He watched him out of the corner of his eye as the battle progressed, and with increasing feelings of

apprehension. That he would enter the struggle in time seemed apparent, but how and when was the puzzling question.

The facts in the case were carefully reviewed, the headmaster insisting that there was nothing really vicious about the boy, and that only his failure to conform to the regular school requirements, to catch the spirit of the place and to do the work assigned him, had led to his failure and downfall.

But the mother was unconvinced. "I know," she said emphatically, "that there is something more back of this, and what that is I demand to be told." The father nodded approval, and the headmaster watched.

"I assure you, madam," he replied, "there is nothing more involved than that which I have already told you." But the woman was stubborn. Finally she launched a telling blow.

"If that is the case," she said imperiously, "why was my boy denied admission to another

school?" She mentioned the school by name. "The headmaster," she added, "assured me that he couldn't accept my boy because of something that you had written him."

This was something of a poser, but the headmaster did not propose to yield. "I don't recall just what I wrote," he said smilingly, "but I can assure you that I said nothing more than I have said to-day. Indeed, I am perfectly willing that you should see a copy of the letter itself."

"I demand to see it," she exclaimed with some heat.

The headmaster started for his files, gazing apprehensively at the silent partner near by. He drew forth the letter and began to read it. It started smoothly and his spirits were rising, but, as he drew near the close, his eye caught sight of a short paragraph at the very end and his heart sank. To omit this paragraph now would involve him in trouble, for the letter did not end just right without it. There was nothing to do

but finish the task and face the storm. With one more glance at the silent father, he plunged bravely in. And this is what he read: "The boy, as I have told you, is not bad, but the real trouble is that he has been badly spoiled by his mother."

The expected explosion immediately followed. It came from the father, but it was not of the kind anticipated. Almost leaping from his chair, he brought his hand down on his knee with a whack and fairly bellowed: "God, I'm glad I came! And that isn't the worst of it," he added. "I have two daughters at home, and she has ruined them too." For the rest of the visit the father, who had apparently for the first time in years found a supporting friend, almost had his arms around the headmaster's neck. They parted with affectionate terms of friendship and esteem.

In strong contrast to the types of parents which have been mentioned, it is refreshing to turn to those of another kind, and it is good to know that such still exist, even though they are

so sadly outnumbered by their more noisy and belligerent friends. Nothing is more stimulating and refreshing to a headmaster's soul than to meet in the course of his work, and especially where discipline is involved, the quiet, sane, and supporting parents who have not forgotten the days of their own youth; who realize that their children will make mistakes and stumble and yield; who are aware that they themselves were guilty of such lapses; but who know, too, that whatever strength and self-control they have secured for the later and maturer years have been gained through the just punishment and stern discipline which their offences brought upon them. Facing parents of this type, the schoolmaster has little concern for the nature of the offence of the erring son. He knows that just as sure as the sun rises and sets that boy will in the end make good; the seriousness of his offence will be brought home to him, the justice of the punishment will be emphasized, and faith and

sanity will bring their ultimate and deserved reward.

Years of experience have driven home to me the truth of this contention more strongly than perhaps anything else in my experience. Less and less do I care for the immediate offence and its nature; more and more do I watch with apprehension and concern the reaction of the boy and his parents to the punishment imposed.

After not quite thirty years of intimate dealings with boys, I have reached the point where, among the thousands of boys I have been privileged to meet, it is possible to test the truth or falsity of many of my theories; for many of these boys are men now, and the effects of those earlier experiences are indelibly stamped on their lives and characters. Among those whom I am gladdest to meet, and who most frequently welcome me with sincerest expressions of friendship and good-will, are the boys whom, in the days of their youth, it was my duty to discipline. Always I

hear the same story: "I couldn't see it straight at the time and I didn't realize what it meant; but the best thing that ever happened to me was the time when I received the punishment that was due me for my offences, and learned not only the presence of weaknesses within but the necessity of overcoming them if I was to be a man. . . . I owe more to the discipline which the school administered to me than to any other influence in my life." It is a remark which, in substance at least, I have heard again and again from the lips of old boys.

This does not mean that discipline should be administered to those who do not deserve it, but it does mean that, when deserved, it is generally the one remedy that will correct and strengthen. Incidents to prove this could be supplied in abundance. Let me give only one or two.

An outburst of youthful enthusiasm had once reached rather dangerous proportions and had developed suddenly a symptom of mob spirit

which boded ill. It was necessary to resort to somewhat drastic measures to convince an excited student body that law and order still prevailed. Several boys were summarily dismissed. For the moment the excitement only increased and restlessness was everywhere apparent. Fancied grievances prompted a few hot-heads to start for home as an expression of sympathy with their mates who had been dismissed. Some thought it wise to advise their parents in advance. One who did so received this prompt and disconcerting telegram in reply: "Come home; go to the back door; let the cook feed you; then go to work." I learned afterwards that the substance of this message, which the troubled youth had rashly conveyed to his friends, speedily became known among the hot-heads of the group, and did more to restore sanity and quiet than all the efforts of the faculty combined.

On this same occasion two boys whose older brother had been dismissed, made up their minds

to leave. They had gone only a short distance from the school when it was discovered that there were not funds enough available to complete the home journey. A telegram was sent to the father, stating the facts and asking for money. The father replied that he would meet them in person and bring them all the money required. In due season he arrived, giving no evidence of his real attitude in the matter. Quietly he said to his impetuous sons: " I suppose you left rather hurriedly and there must be some cleaning-up to do. Suppose we go back to Andover and straighten things out." Arriving in Andover, he asked, " Have you said anything to the principal about your plans? " " No," was the reply. " Don't you think we had better call on him and explain matters before you go? " " Yes," came the brief but enthusiastic response.

A little later the trio appeared at my office. I looked the father over and I confess to apprehensions. He was a splendid type of American

citizen, well over six feet in height and of magnificent physical proportions. I knew that he had always taken special pride in maintaining his youthful spirits and interests with his boys, and that when the ice left the Hudson River near their home each spring he was accustomed to swim across and back, with the boys tagging at his heels, to show that he was still young in spirit and vigor. I regretted the possibility of losing his esteem and good-will.

He closed the door and then turned to his boys. "I understand," he said quietly, "that you boys think you ought to leave school because your brother has been expelled." Two nodding heads gave their unqualified assent to this declaration. "Well," added the father with a smile, "you are not going to leave school. You are going to stay here and redeem the family name, that is, if my money holds out and the faculty are willing. And," he added with some feeling, "I want to tell you this, and I want to say it in the presence

of Mr. Stearns, if Bill had not been expelled for what he has done, you would not have had to call on me for money to get you home. I would have come up here myself and taken you home. You would never have been permitted to stay in a school that would overlook an offence of that kind and extend leniency to a boy who had proved himself so ungrateful for what he has secured here. Now go back to your work, and remember that you are to reëstablish the good name of your family in this old school." He stepped forward to the desk and extended his hand in a warm and friendly grip, leaving the office with two disillusioned and downcast boys following at his heels.

The boys remained in the school and completed their courses with credit. They left, carrying with them the good-will and esteem of students and faculty alike. But the most interesting development in the situation was the final effect on the boy who had been subjected to punishment and forced to sever the school connections. In

his case the reaction came much sooner than it does with most. Among all the boys of my acquaintance, I know of none who developed a more loyal and enthusiastic interest in the school than did he. His enthusiasm indeed became so unbounded that he was made secretary of the Academy's largest Alumni Association. During his brief term of office he more than doubled its enrollment. When he came back to the school, as he sometimes did, he did not hesitate to bring his bag to my door and make my home his headquarters,—a rather unusual occurrence when a boy has only recently left the school halls, and when some of his friends at least are still there. Again and again before his untimely death that boy would tell me with deepest feeling of what that deserved discipline had meant in his life. "It set me thinking," he said; "showed me that I was drifting and didn't know it. It gave me the clue which turned me right-about-face. Whatever progress I have made, or whatever suc-

cess I attain, will date from that time. Had the offence been overlooked, I might have become a worthless good-for-nothing."

I mentioned this incident at one of our alumni dinners recently. At the close of the banquet, and after most of the group had left, a young fellow called me aside. "What you said to-night," he began, "gave me just the courage I needed to say something to you that has been on my mind for the last six years." He spoke with evident feeling.

"Do you remember the conditions under which I had to leave school?" he asked

I had to admit that my memory on that point was a bit hazy.

"Well," he continued with commendable frankness, "I was fired for stealing. How I happened to do it I don't know. But I did; and I was caught, thank God! When I left, you told me that my future would all hinge on the way I took my medicine; that if I admitted to myself

that I deserved all that came to me in the way of punishment, and perhaps more, I would have a basis on which to make a fresh and clean start; but that if I didn't, I would probably end in jail. I never forgot that," he added with a smile, " and here's the record I have been wanting to show you. I slipped it in my pocket when I left home to-night, thinking that I might be able to screw up my courage to show it to you. But I would not have had the nerve to produce it if it had not been for that story you told. That hit me square."

He drew from his pocket a package of papers. I looked at them with keen interest. First there were reports from a well-known college, covering the full four-year course. The marks were all A's and B's; and the misdemeanor column was absolutely clean. Several comments indicated work and aptitude of an exceptionally high order. A couple of letters from business firms for whom he had worked since leaving college tes-

tified in terms of unqualified praise to his reliability and faithfulness.

"I learned my lesson, and I've made good," he said with a show of pride, "and I wanted you to know it. But," he added quietly and in a serious tone, "if I had not been caught and received the jolt that dismissal from school gave me, heaven only knows what might have become of me."

Why it is that parents are so seldom able to appreciate this truth, so plainly evident to those who deal constantly with youth, is a puzzle which I have never been able to solve. Parents who refuse to allow deserved punishment to fall are evidently prompted to take their untenable position through the fear of losing the good-will and affection of their children. The passing frown or trembling lip inspired by the fear of pain carry more weight and exert a more deadening influence than all the possibilities or certainties of the more serious troubles that are still in store,

and that could generally be avoided if deserved discipline were allowed to play its proper part. And the very thing that these misguided parents fail so completely to understand is that their doubtful attitude is inviting that very loss of affection and esteem, for the years to come at least, which they so deeply dread. It is easy enough to distinguish, even in school days, between those boys who have been pampered and favored at home and those who have been blessed with parents of sanity and courage; between those whose parents value more highly the smile of the passing moment than the stable character of later years, and those who face bravely the discomfort of the moment in the assurance that maturity at least will bring to those unsteady youths the appreciation of real values and, in the end, their undying affection and esteem.

The very attitude of boys towards their fathers and mothers, the terms in which they speak of them, will regularly tell the tale. "The old

man" and "the old woman" are terms always used by the former group; "father" and "mother" belong to the latter. And when those unequaled words—"father" and "mother"—are spoken with reverence and respect, one can rest assured that that fortunate boy has not missed in his home the stern hand of discipline when discipline was needed for his own upbuilding.

The subject of discipline is one of such vital significance to our modern life in general that I cannot confine my discussion of it to the realms of the home alone. It deserves and will receive special consideration later.

PART THREE

RELIGION IN CIVILIZATION

"The man who cannot wonder, who does not habitually wonder and worship, were he President of innumerable Royal Societies, and carried the 'Mechanique Celeste' and 'Hegel's Philosophy,' and the Epitome of all Laboratories and Observatories with their results, in his single head—is but a Pair of Spectacles behind which there is no Eye."

—*Thomas Carlyle.*

PART THREE

RELIGION IN CIVILIZATION

IT is difficult to disassociate the home from religion. The true home is based on religion. Its very atmosphere must of necessity be spiritual. It is created and sustained by those unseen but immensely real qualities of the human soul that exist only in the realms of the spirit,—love, honor, reverence, service, sacrifice. And it is on these abstract realities that religion rests.

In the development of civilization religion has played a commanding part. Without its influence the human race could never have attained all that to-day, through the benefits of civilization, it counts most precious and most satisfying.

For centuries religion has exercised its potent influence on youth, checking the baser impulse,

restraining from the evil and unworthy deed, strengthening in the moment of temptation, and always calling into expression and fuller control the best and noblest in human character.

It is common to speak of youth as irreligious. Nothing could be further from the truth. But youth has not cast its religion into cold dogma and forbidding creed. To dogma youth is utterly impervious. Creeds to it are meaningless. Formal religion not only makes scant appeal but frequently repels. But the fundamentals of religion revealed by Christ and lived by Him awaken always in the heart of a youth, even though he may be unconscious of their true significance, a definite and often compelling response. In the ordinary interpretation of the term religion probably played little part in the appeal to which those Yale boys so bravely responded; yet it was the spiritual appeal alone, as it spoke in the voice of duty, that called them back from safety and asked them to give their all;

and, without exception, every boy in that university, and every boy who later heard the story, acclaimed the deed and bowed his head in reverence before those who had climbed and attained the pinnacle of spiritual grandeur.

If my daily contacts with boys did not convince me that youth is at heart religious, an experience of my own college days would do so. It was my rare privilege during those impressionable years to sit in the classroom of one of the greatest teachers who has ever filled a college chair, Charles E. Garman, professor of philosophy in Amherst College. Mr. Garman combined a wonderfully keen intellect with a deep and genuine spiritual nature; and he had besides an unusual power to interest and inspire his pupils. His class in philosophy, covering the last two years of the college course, was known as the hardest course in the entire curriculum; yet it was elected by all but two or three of the class of which I was a member.

It was Mr. Garman's custom to lead his class through the various systems of philosophy as they had developed during the passing centuries, forcing us to imbibe their spirit and, so far as possible, to believe with all our hearts in the truth of the doctrines on which they rested, until, after constant debate, argument, and thought, we were forced to recognize their fallacies and were prepared to take the next forward step.

Nothing could equal the deep and intense interest of that group of college boys. Discussion never stopped with the classroom. It went on everywhere. Mr. Garman's study, a mile from the campus, gathered within its walls every night a group of eager students, and the battle was continued till the late hour called us back to our rooms. Frequently small groups would slip from their fraternity houses in the early morning hours, and, stretched under shady trees or roaming the countryside, would renew the struggle to understand the great and eternal problems of

human life and the human soul that we had come to feel were the most important and the only real things in the world.

The class met during the last hour of the morning session, and it was our program to go from it direct to dinner. The closing bell would ring, but no one would stir. With a smile on his face, Mr. Garman, to whom this was no new experience, would say quietly: "Gentlemen, the bell has rung. I am willing to go on if you desire, but I wish no one to stay under compulsion." And none left. The class would go on, fifteen minutes, a half hour, sometimes three-quarters of an hour beyond the closing bell. Far from protesting, those boys welcomed as a rare privilege this added opportunity to wrestle, under the leadership of a master-mind, with the great problems that concern the human soul. Dinners grew cold and often were swept from tables by irate boarding-house keepers; but no one cared. Underclassmen dubbed us crazy and shook their heads

in amused contempt at our seeming inability to place the customary emphasis on the commonplace topics of student discussion.

If we were deemed crazy during the early months of this unusual course, we must have seemed hopeless lunatics to our mates as we neared its end. For the philosophical peak we had been so laboriously ascending during all those months we found to be crowned with the Atonement of Christ Himself. During those never-to-be-forgotten days the atmosphere became charged with a veritable spiritual electricity. We seemed to move in a new world in which the ordinary interests of student life became wholly inconsequential. The fact that the most important ball game of the year was scheduled for the afternoon would be almost forgotten; and the noon meal, if we were fortunate enough to find one waiting for us, furnished only a further opportunity to continue the discussions begun in the morning's recitation hour. Several of us

were members of the college ball-nine that spring, and I shall never forget the feelings akin to resentment with which we faced the necessity of missing occasional classes in order to play scheduled games away from home with rival college teams. Under the leadership and inspiration of a master-teacher we were dealing at first hand with the great facts of religion and the spiritual world, and in terms that had meaning to the minds of youth. And that experience was the most exhilarating and satisfying we had ever known.

The more modern teacher of philosophy, reveling in the cold abstractions of agnosticism, has never been able to evoke an enthusiasm of this kind.

By a curious coincidence the administration of the college at just this time was in the hands of one who was inclined somewhat to excesses in his outward and formal religious life. With sincere apprehension he noted the falling off in the at-

tendance at college prayer-meetings of those who he believed were coming under dangerous influences and were seemingly losing their religion. We were clearly under suspicion. But remonstrances proved of no avail. The college prayer-meeting never seemed less attractive. Even the regular church service seemed to lack something vital and real. Probably we were a bit conceited and unduly critical. Yet we were clearly conscious that in that classroom in philosophy we were dealing at closer range with the great truths of life, as the minds and hearts of youth are given to interpret those truths, than could ever have been possible in the prayer-meeting and the church. And yet, of that class of only seventy-odd men, seventeen, if I remember correctly, elected the ministry as their life calling, while the rest, whatever their choice of profession, faced the world with a new and compelling consciousness of the sacredness of human life, of the proximity and reality of the spiritual world, and of man's

duty and privilege through a life of service to aid his Creator in the carrying-out of the divine plan.

No, youth at heart is anything but irreligious. But as youth approaches manhood its religious interest will wane or grow just in so far as the influences and surroundings to which it is subjected are benumbing or stimulating. To-day they are chiefly of the former kind. Mr. Garman himself, during the last years of his work, admitted that he had found it necessary to reshape somewhat the character of his course, and to emphasize the sociological and economic rather than the spiritual elements in human life, in order to meet the changed attitude of the student mind. In other words, the deadening influences of an increasingly irreligious age had already checked the natural growth of that religious interest which is found always in the heart of youth.

But what has in part disappeared from the lives of the maturer youth of college years is still found among those a bit younger. Preachers

regularly accustomed to fill college and school pulpits unite in testifying to the fact that the schoolboy audience is far the more responsive of the two. Any one who has looked into the faces of five or six hundred boys, when some preacher who has a real message is addressing them, and has seen those faces merge into one solid phalanx of an eager and responsive whole when some deep and vital religious truth is eloquently touched upon, needs no further assurance that youth is at heart religious.

All the more, then, must we deplore the loss from our modern life of those vital and stimulating influences that lie at the basis of human character, and that, through the passing years, have so strongly aided youth in carrying out its noblest impulses and realizing its highest aspirations.

We cannot easily estimate the real values of religious ideals and influences in our own lives, yet those influences have always been at work,

The Church has played its part, incompletely and hesitatingly no doubt, and yet offering us the restraint of fear and condemnation for wrongdoing, and the appeal to nobler thinking and cleaner living. The old-time home, coöperating to the full, has seen to it that the recognition of God as a present and potent force in human life should be definitely acknowledged, and the fear of God instilled in youthful hearts. Whatever the broader and more tolerant thought of later years may have brought in the way of gain, only a fool can be blind enough to ignore the constant and powerful influence that religion has exerted on western Christian civilization.

To-day that influence has been sadly undermined. In the lives of many of our youth it has ceased almost wholly to exist. It is the constant complaint of the Church that youth no longer responds to its attractions and appeal. In the home the outward manifestations of religion, at least, have largely disappeared. To most of our

boys and girls to-day the Bible has become practically a closed book. Family prayers, so common in times past, and even the simple request for God's blessing on the daily meal, are almost unknown. Under the requirements of law the teaching of religion, and frequently even the simplest religious exercises, are debarred from our public schools. Religion, at least in its outward manifestations, has been steadily relegated to the scrap-heaps of the past.

With this almost complete disappearance of the outward manifestations of religious belief it is not to be wondered at that youth should find little in the Church and other formal religious activities to appeal to its inner spiritual nature. Youth does not even fully understand what the Church stands for, or just what it means. To youth the Church seems to be chiefly concerned with the trivial and inconsequential, and to ignore the great and fundamental spiritual verities of which youth is dimly conscious, and to the chal-

lenges of which in great emergencies youth invariably responds.

A father, himself a minister, has voiced to me the common feeling of pessimism over the seeming lack of religious interest among the youth of the present day.

"Everything," he writes, "is there except one thing. These boys have deep feeling and a strong loyalty. But organized religion leaves them cold. It doesn't represent their vital interests or express their most sacred emotions. Yet I should say they were religious-minded. From the Church point of view they are wasted. They have been reading a book I am soon to publish—with sympathy and agreement, but somehow the Church doesn't interpret them. It's a great question."

Yes, it is a great question, indeed,—a question so great as to demand our keenest and most unbiased thought.

Major-General Leonard Wood expressed to

me not long ago his strong conviction that if, as he had often been told, the American youth of to-day, as contrasted with the youth of former years, were losing their religious interest, the fact must be accepted as evidence of the beginning of our national decay.

This is strong language, but, I think, not too strong.

We must bear in mind, however, that there is a distinct difference between active religious interest and being still at heart religious. The latter is the natural endowment with which we are all blessed by our Creator. For the former we ourselves are chiefly responsible; and if the youth of the present day has lost its religious interest, it is because of the conditions and influences with which it has been surrounded, and for these we of an older generation must bear the blame.

What has caused the loss of this vital element in our American life? And why is it that the

American people as a whole are so indifferent to a loss of such sinister significance?

A complete answer to these very natural questions cannot easily be given. But it can be fairly stated that the materialistic spirit of the age in which we live has exerted its deadening influence on all that is not purely practical and utilitarian. Spiritual values find no place in such a scheme of thought, and spiritual interests have been largely supplanted by interests of a more material kind. Men of calibre and vision, be they statesmen or leaders in the business world, are not blind to the truth. But for men of smaller mould the pace of the material world has been a bit too fast of late. The wine of material success has befuddled their senses. The wonderful advances in the realms of applied science which have ministered to their physical comfort and ease have undermined their sanity and sadly warped their judgments. For the moment, at least, they have lost their bearings.

The standard by which success is measured is no longer the standard of character and moral worth, but that of financial standing and material achievement.

Material prosperity invariably breeds a spirit of selfishness and of iconoclasm, and it is this spirit, so rampant to-day, that leads men to look with contempt on all that is associated with the past. Puffed with conceit, they seem prone to believe that for them alone, a type of superman almost, a generous Fate has reserved these so recently discovered secrets of science by which the material wealth of the world has been so suddenly and so enormously increased, and by which their physical life has been made so much smoother. This curious attitude of mind has spread through all classes, and has created an atmosphere in which the youth of to-day, still seeing its visions and still eager to realize them, finds scant encouragement or help. Especially in the home this sinister atmosphere works on the

mind and heart of youth similar to a numbing poison.

This strange mental attitude of the successful man of affairs is constantly reflected in letters written by fathers about their boys and their school work. Let me quote briefly from two.

"I cannot afford at my time of life," writes this visionless materialist, "to have my boy waste any time in studying the Bible, because it is my intention that he shall adopt some useful occupation."

The "useful occupation," so commonly measured in the American mind by the standard of the dollar, cannot include in the minds of men of this type anything which deals with the higher and spiritual values in human nature and that is not thoroughly and entirely practical.

Writing about his boy's course of study, another father says:

"I do not want any Latin, history, or grammar. The boy might, if he has time, take Eng-

lish literature. . . . I must have him develop along the lines I have indicated, not a lot of instruction that will do him no good in after life. We cannot afford to waste our time in that way in these days."

"In these days." These wonderful days in which we poor humans have suddenly been thrust to such heights that we can learn nothing from the teachings of history, when the correct use of the mother tongue can be safely dispensed with, and when for limited recreation, if time can be found in our mechanical life, we may just glimpse the struggles, the hopes, the aspirations of the human mind and soul as they have found expression through the passing centuries in literature.

If these sentiments represented only the opinions of the individuals who uttered them, we might well afford to smile. Unfortunately they represent the character and scope of the limited thinking of a great mass of our American people to-day. No better proof of this fact can be found

than in the recent election to the senatorship of a great state and the threatened candidacy for the high office of President of the United States of two successful materialists who have publicly and blatantly announced their contempt for education and sound learning. Not all are equally frank in voicing their views, but their lives and actions and votes place them in one and the same class. And this is far from humorous,—it is tragic. We are reminded of the famous saying of Bishop Berkeley uttered many years ago: "Whatever the world thinks, he who has not much meditated upon God, the human mind, and the Summum Bonum, may possibly make a thriving earthworm, but will certainly make a sorry patriot and a sorry statesman."

Fortunately the race has never been dependent upon human earthworms for constructive thought and leadership. Real leaders have first risen above the mud of materialism. And when earthworms have rashly ventured to leave their

allotted home they have generally in the end shriveled and died, or, at best, become food for fishes that swim in the waters beneath and birds that soar in the heavens above the earth. However sadly outnumbered, those who, in the world's history, have saved civilization from threatened disaster and pointed it to the higher levels of life, have always been made of tougher and finer stuff. To-day, in our hour of need, there are increasing evidences that such leadership is again to be supplied.

The World War did not bring us the Utopia that we desired and hoped for. It seemed only to leave us chaos. But that chaos has set us thinking, and our thought is carrying us more and more away from the material world and back to the realms of the spirit and religion. Appeals for the restoration of religion in our national life are steadily increasing in volume and strength. They are coming, too, chiefly from those in positions of real leadership in public, professional,

and business life. Our late President Harding in several of his public addresses pleaded earnestly for a return of old-fashioned religion in our national life. I quote from one of these:

"In spite of our complete divorcement of Church and State, quite in harmony with our religious freedom, there is an important relationship between Church and Nation, because no nation can prosper, no nation can survive, if it ever forgets Almighty God. I have believed that religious reverence has played a very influential and helpful part in the matchless American achievement, and I wish it ever to abide. If I were to utter a prayer for the republic to-night, it would be to reconsecrate us in religious devotion and make us abidingly a God-fearing, God-loving people."

President Coolidge has frequently sounded the same note. The Secretary of War has very recently made a similar plea. A very unusual and significant editorial article appeared only a few weeks ago in the *Manufacturers' Record* of Baltimore, Maryland. I venture to quote from it at some length:

Judge Gary, at the annual meeting of the American

Iron and Steel Institute, made an address which is probably one of the most remarkable ever delivered before a business meeting of that kind in this or any other country. It was devoted almost wholly to the subject of religion and to the Bible, urging the members of the Institute to study the Bible and to follow its teachings.

Judge Gary had recently returned from a trip to Palestine and other Eastern countries. Evidently the spirit that hovers over Palestine, and the thoughts that must flood the soul of every intelligent man who visits that country, were still making their deep impress upon him when, in his address, he stressed over and above everything else the supreme importance of the Bible as the guide for the individual man and for the nation.

One of the most remarkable movements ever known in the history of this country, and perhaps in the history of all countries, is the broadening interest in the study of the Bible and in the preaching of Christianity in offices, in shops, and from editorial chairs. Never in our experience has there been such a universal discussion and unceasing endorsement of Christianity in the newspapers of the country as is seen to-day. Hundreds of the leading daily papers of all sections are constantly publishing editorials about Christianity, many of them matching anything which is heard from the pulpit. A number of daily papers are publishing the Bible as a serial, giving a chapter day by day. Hundreds are publishing one or two Bible texts every day. Business men everywhere are, to a greater extent than we have

ever seen before, emphasizing the supreme importance of religion; and to-day one who reads widely would probably see references to the necessity of the Golden Rule in business a hundred times more frequently than in former years.

Judge Gary's splendid address only serves to bring out more clearly the fact that great business organizations composed of the foremost men of America are recognizing that, over and above all else in this world, the teachings of the Bible must be the supreme guide of mankind, even in business matters, if the world is to be saved from the turmoil and chaos of the hour.

These are truly hopeful signs. But they are still only signs. If the need which these thoughtful leaders so clearly recognize is to be met, and the hopes which they voice are to be realized, the responsibility rests squarely on every loyal American citizen to scan his own record and to contribute his individual share to the restoration of the crumbling foundations of our national life.

PART FOUR

MODERN SUBSTITUTES—THE MOVIES, THE STAGE, AND LITERATURE

"Civilization surely is in danger. Men and women, even children are thinking of their rights rather than of their duties. They have gone mad at pleasure seeking. They are crowding, crowding, crowding towards a goal—which too often is the insane asylum, the prison, the bankruptcy court (financial or moral) and despair.

"Within a day or two I have received the report of the superintendent of the State Hospital for the Insane in Kansas City. This able expert blames for the increased cost of his institution and others like it and the increased cost of caring for defectives by the State, the motion picture and the motor-car almost exclusively. I would go further and blame it to the general jazz environment which surrounds the race."

—Dr. Max G. Schlapp, Criminologist.

PART FOUR

MODERN SUBSTITUTES—THE MOVIES, THE STAGE, AND LITERATURE

WHAT are we offering our boys and girls of this modern age in place of what has been lost? What are the influences that are moulding lives and shaping characters, and that are to determine the quality of the manhood and womanhood of to-morrow?

It is pretty commonly agreed, I think, that the most wide-spread, if not the most potent, influence at work upon our young people to-day is found in the movies and the stage. The movies, at least, were unknown to earlier generations. The stage had little contact with plastic youth, subjected to the influence of old-fashioned homes where there regularly existed an attitude of misgiving towards everything and every one con-

nected with the theatre. But the boys and girls of the present generation find here their greatest and most constant source of amusement and relaxation. Daily the movies minister to the supposed wants of hundreds of thousands of our children, rich and poor, north, south, east, and west. Surely we cannot wisely ignore the character of such an influence making itself felt, as this does, directly and constantly on the minds and souls of impressionable youth.

With all its wonderful possibilities for good, and in spite of the good it sometimes does accomplish, this recent addition to the life of the world has yet to prove that its total effect has been anything but harmful, and immensely harmful at that. If parents were still in control, and would exercise their discretion and judgment as to the pictures and plays that their children might see, we might view the situation more calmly. But parents are not often in control, and, when they are, they appear to have lost all sense of

proportion and judgment. It is the youngsters themselves who decide, and the decision is based neither on experience nor judgment, but on impulse—and an impulse most often resulting from an appeal to the weakest in human nature.

There can be no doubt that one of the strongest appeals that the movies make, and with very evident intent, relates to the irregularities of human life, the extravagances in human action, and the unnatural in human relationships. The sex appeal is almost always present and blatant. No matter what the individual film may be or the individual program arranged, it is almost impossible to sit through a movie show without suddenly and unexpectedly confronting this appeal either in the announced film or in a special film added to those advertised on the regular program. The stage has followed much the same line, until one has to search long to find a play which does not, somewhere in its course, bring to one's cheeks the blush of shame.

Not long ago I read in an issue of *The Farm Journal* an article of timely and vigorous protest. The writer, Mr. John B. Wallace, collected at random a list of some of the films that were at the time enjoying exceptional popularity on the screen throughout the land. A glance at the titles alone is enough. Here are a few:

Why Trust Your Husband?; The Fruits of Desire; The Woman of Pleasure; His Temporary Wife; Playthings of Passion; My Husband's Other Wife; A Bachelor's Children; Experimental Marriage; The Flame of Passion; My Unmarried Wife; Sex Lure; Flames of the Flesh; Lawless Love; When Men Desire; His Bridal Night; The Evil Women Do; For Husbands Only.

With commendable frankness and courage Mr. Wallace truthfully says:

> Countless thousands of people can and do stay away from the movies, going only when a particular picture is shown that they know, by the reputation of the

author or producer, will not insult either their intelligence or their decency. *Thousands more find such pictures so rare that they never go.* Yet there are other countless thousands who will and do take their places; and it is these pathetic audiences, helplessly swallowing all the drivel and nasty sex stuff that is flung at them, that support the motion-picture business to-day.

The comedy is in many ways more dangerous to young people than the serious dramas, and especially to small children. The theatres that cater to the patronage of children realize that their audiences are not interested in dramatic productions, and therefore, for their benefit, exhibit action pictures and comedies. Children are naturally fun-loving and have a keen sense of the ridiculous. Even little tots of four and five years will get a laugh out of the antics of a screen comedian. Consequently, the association of policemen and clergymen in ridiculous rôles early breeds a disrespect which it is almost impossible for parental teaching and explanation to offset.

Furthermore, the comedies are the worst offenders when it comes to appealing to sex instincts. Some of the situations border very closely upon obscenity. Very few comedies of the popular type lack a bedroom scene, a disrobing act, or a bevy of young women who have taken off all the clothes they dare. At least the sex dramas of the serious picture plays attempt to prove something, but the comedies drag in the sex thrill without the shadow of an excuse, except the cash value of

catering to the worst passions of the boys and men in the audience.

The other day I picked up a copy of the *Police Gazette*. I can distinctly recall the time when a grown man would feel inclined to blush if caught glancing through this periodical. But after a decade of motion-picture comedies the Gazette seemed to me strangely tame and innocuous. It is much the same with books. Novels that are kept under lock and key in private libraries lest the children get hold of them, and that can only be obtained upon request by adults at the public libraries, are dramatized and thrown on the screen in all their details. If any portion is expurgated it is only in fear of state censors or police regulations.

When producers delve into the past for material, as they are obliged to do more and more, the whole history of mankind is open to them—the most stirring and dramatic events, the most tender of love stories, the most hair-raising adventures. And what do they select? Invariably the ugliest and most salacious episodes of history, something that has "a little spice." And then they bear down with all possible weight on the spicy portions.

But why go on? Can any sane person, not unmindful of the days of his own youth, accept for a moment the belief that plastic and impressionable boys and girls, who have not yet fully

gained their self-control, and whose hardest fights in the days of youth must always be against physical temptation, can remain uninfluenced by the constant admission to their minds of such vicious poison as this? If one were to accept as true the teachings of the screen, it would be necessary to believe that the home of ideals and purity is practically non-existent, that virtue in man and woman is altogether a novelty, that ministers and those who profess religion are cowardly hypocrites, and that the real attractions of life are to be found in the wanton violation of those old standards of morality and long-tested human relationships which have stood for centuries as the secure foundations of western and Christian civilization.

The tendencies of the teachings of the movies have their counterpart in the literature of the day. The best sellers among the novels are those which deal with the same hackneyed theme. The more extravagant, the more blatant the portrayal

of domestic infelicity and human irregularities, the wider the market. Many of the best magazines have in a measure yielded to this tendency, while our news-stands are fairly flooded with cheap magazines, the very titles of which make clear their character, and which carry stories many of which would not have been tolerated by the public, even if they had been permitted by law, only a few years ago.

A well-known monthly magazine, which boasts of an impressive circulation, and which has never been averse to catering to the weaker side of human nature, not long ago published a serial story of the familiar and extravagant modern type. The first installment left little unsaid, and the advertising it was given was widespread and noisy.

A mother chanced to be visiting her son at the time, and picked up a copy of the magazine in her boy's room. She glanced through the opening chapters of the story with increasing appre-

hension, noted the suggestiveness of the pictures adorning the pages, and then in unfeigned distress brought the magazine to me.

"How dare they publish such stuff?" she said excitedly. "It's enough to corrupt any boy."

And it was.

A month later the proprietor of a local newsstand sent for me. The monthly issue of the magazine in question had just appeared, carrying the second installment of the offensive story. With it had come three hundred roughly printed sheets containing a reprint of the opening chapters. A note of explanation from the publishers stated frankly, and with evident pride, that there had been an overwhelming demand for the previous issue, a demand prompted by the widespread interest the story had aroused, and which they had not been able to supply. They added that it had seemed to them wise to reprint the opening chapters for distribution among the purchasers of the later issue of the magazine, in order

that they might thus be enabled to follow the complete story; and they ventured the guess that three hundred copies would probably be sufficient for local needs.

The significance of this incident should be at once apparent. And yet I have frequently seen copies of this same magazine in the homes of people supposed to be eminently respectable and enjoying the esteem and confidence of the public. The fact is that the restraints ordinarily imposed on immature youth in the matter of reading have been withdrawn, even in the home, as they have been in relation to the stage. Yet the influence of the written word on the youthful mind is impressive and lasting.

PART FIVE

MODERN SUBSTITUTES—SOCIAL CONDITIONS

"Any society can put down offenses if it chooses. I hold the whole school responsible for this offense. I don't know who the offenders are, and I don't want to know. They would not have done it, if the rest of you disliked it enough."

—*Edward Thring.*

PART FIVE

MODERN SUBSTITUTES—SOCIAL CONDITIONS

A THIRD factor that has always played a prominent part in its influence on youth is found in the social conditions, be they local or not, with which youth is surrounded. The influence here again is hard to define, but it has always contributed its generous share to the shaping of the habits and the developing of the characters of our boys and girls.

The loss of the ordinary conventions of life, now so conspicuous, has its place here and its effect on the social conditions of the present day in which our young people move so freely and so strangely. It is hard to recognize in these conditions elements that are stimulating and helpful either physically, intellectually, or morally.

Some little has been gained, no doubt; too much has been lost. The lack of the old and tested moral standards; the increasing disrespect of law; the undermining of the home; the flippancy with which many of the most sacred things of life are discussed and treated; all-night dances for children still in their early teens; automobile "joy rides," unchaperoned and unrestrained—these things contribute nothing to the stability of youth, while they strain it, on its weakest side, to the breaking point.

Not many months ago I had the privilege of addressing a group of ex-service men at their annual banquet. At the close of the speaking a young fellow asked me if he could have a quiet chat with me. I consented and we withdrew to a corner of the room. There I listened to a strange and heartrending story.

The boy, for he was still that in appearance, told me that he had enlisted at a very early age for the ambulance service in France. He had

been badly gassed and was sent to Paris to recuperate and perhaps to be sent back to America. After examination the doctors assured him that he had only a fighting chance for life, and advised him to return home as soon as he could. Passage could not easily be secured at that time, and he was forced to remain for some weeks in the French capital. Here a fit of discouragement seized him, and for the time he lost his grip on himself. The loose conditions which prevailed in Paris exerted their subtle influence on his weakened will, and he plunged into the excesses of the life which surrounded him on all sides. As the time approached for him to sail for the homeland he was overwhelmed with remorse as he realized how far he had departed from the earlier and finer standards which had formerly governed his conduct. In this state of mind his one and great ambition was to get back to America, where, freed from the temptations which had beset him in that foreign city, and stimulated by

the conditions he had formerly known in his own country, he felt confident he would be able to get his bearings once more and make a new and honorable start.

At this point in his story a look of pain came over his boyish face. He paused for a moment, and then, leaning forward and with dramatic intensity he said, " But, Mr. Stearns, I came back to a Sodom! "

I asked him to tell me just what he meant by that.

" Why, you see," he replied with feeling, " I had always moved among the best people at home and in neighboring places." He mentioned several well-known cities. " I had entered fully into the social life with my friends, both girls and boys; and I did not for a moment dream that the old conditions and standards of conduct I had known so well did not still exist. But I found that they had all gone. I found things as bad, and, in a sense, worse than they had been in Paris

where every loose element was in evidence, for here I was dealing again with people who were supposed to be respectable."

He went on to tell me of some of his recent experiences in this supposedly respectable social life to which he had returned with such high hopes. He told of the complete absence of the old and restraining conventions, of the freedom with which old and young, boys and girls alike, openly indulged in liquor, and the effect of this indulgence on their actions. He mentioned specific cases, almost unbelievable had they been related by one of less sincere earnestness. And then, in distress so manifest as to be pathetic, he said, "And under the excitement of it all my ambitions and resolves all broke down and I went the limit again. But, Mr. Stearns, what *could* a fellow do under such conditions?"

The self-righteous Pharisee will doubtless answer that the boy was unforgivably weak, and that he alone was responsible for his undermined

will and unworthy impulse. In a sense he will perhaps be right; but the schoolmaster, whose continued dealings with unstable youth add constantly to his stock of charity, knows only too well that in this case a lad, at the most critical moment in his life, was subjected to conditions so needless and so grossly unfair as to arouse our just pity for their victim and our hot resentment against those who were responsible for or tolerated them.

I could give innumerable incidents of the same distressing kind, stories that have been told me by remorse-stricken boys, and frequently by distressed parents. But such stories, all too common nowadays, are not needed to drive home to any who will listen and think the indisputable truth that we cannot subject plastic youth to the lax and deplorable conditions that characterize our modern social life without paying the inevitable penalty in the dimming of spiritual ideals and the weakening of moral fibre.

The public attitude towards these striking changes that have come over our social life forms an interesting, if a somewhat disheartening, study. How the plain influence of these things, so clearly taught by the history of the human race in its long struggle from savagery to the vantage point of the present day, can be ignored by those of supposed intelligence is impossible to explain. That the public is not altogether comfortable in the assumption of this attitude of heedless indifference is clear from its own testimony. Struggling to conceal unpleasant truths, it has invented terms misleading and unfair. For that which is attractive and alluring it makes use of soft and smooth-sounding names. For that which it would escape it chooses words the very harshness of which inspires repulsion. Like the ostrich, it strives to hide its head in the sands of its own complacency and force itself to believe that all is well.

" Tolerance," says Coleridge, " is only possible

when indifference has made it so." But how are we to account for the callous if not criminal indifference of the present day?

Everywhere we find the tendency to use the soft pedal when dealing with unpleasant facts. We speak of " petting parties " and " joy rides " as if these were only innocuous and wholesome pleasures. We decline to acknowledge the perfectly evident dangers which they involve. They fit in nicely with our pleasure-loving tendencies, so why worry? We talk indignantly and sneeringly of " blue laws," of " Puritanic traditions," of " out-of-date " and " old-fashioned " standards, and, if one is courageous enough to face plain facts and define them, he will promptly be dubbed a " Grundy " or a " Grouch." We would like to believe that human nature has undergone some inexplicable change in recent years and can face serenely temptations which, in all ages, have undermined or wrecked human character unless successfully overcome, and can absorb with im-

munity moral poison which has always worked with deadly effect in humankind. Careless and indifferent parents will smilingly tell us that our boys and girls to-day are different, that they are wiser than were their parents at their age, and that they can safely be trusted to deal with life and conditions as they find them, whatever those conditions may be.

But human nature does not change. To-day the laws which govern its development, like the laws in the natural world, are stable and operative. Those who deal constantly and intimately with youth cannot be deceived here. Daily incidents confront them which ever refute this claim, and the significance of which is plain. One incident alone of my recent experience will be sufficient, I think, to prove my point.

On a beautiful spring afternoon I had returned from a journey which had kept me away from the school for several days. It happened to be a half-holiday. The regular ball game scheduled

for the afternoon had been unexpectedly canceled. The boys were free for a few hours to do about as they pleased. Ordinarily one would have expected to see scores, if not hundreds, of these fellows scattered over the various school playing-fields, indulging with the enthusiasm of youth in what are regarded as its most attractive pastimes, but the baseball fields, the tennis courts, and the track were as deserted as if some dire calamity had suddenly wrapped the place in gloom.

"Where are all the boys this afternoon?" I asked one of my teachers.

"I don't know," he said, "but I imagine that you will find them at the movies."

"The movies a day like this," I exclaimed; "that's impossible."

"Well," he answered, "I saw a line of them heading that way soon after the lunch hour, and I think you will find them there."

Still a doubter, I set about my routine work.

Late in the afternoon I watched from my study window these youngsters streaming up from the village. My friend had evidently been right. Pondering over the matter, I made up my mind that there must have been some unusual attraction at the theatre that afternoon to draw several hundred boys from the sunny and alluring playing-fields into the dark and dingy precincts of a movie house. I decided to investigate, and, during the evening, strolled down to the village. The posters conspicuously displayed in front of the building told the story. It was not necessary to investigate further. The film shown that afternoon was "Theda Bara in Cleopatra." It is hardly necessary to add that it was not an enthusiasm for classical history that drew those boys from ball grounds and tennis field into the murky atmosphere of that dingy playhouse on that beautiful spring day.

No, human nature has not changed; and we only make fools of ourselves if we try to believe

that it has. Youth will respond, as it has always done, to the baser appeal when that appeal is strong and alluring.

Robert Service, in a poem written shortly before the war, has touched on this theme and has told the truth. I sometimes wonder how much stronger he might have made his poem, or how much more boldly he would have spoken, had he written several years later. He describes the plight of an angel in heaven, a red-blooded and somewhat restless individual, who, tiring of golden crowns, of golden harps and golden streets, requests his good Lord for permission to visit the earth for a time and mingle with mortals. The permission is granted and he starts on his journey. His arrival is depicted, and we are told of the surprise with which the devils in the lower regions watched his advent. Then Mr. Service goes on to tell us what happened. Here is what he says:

Never was seen such an angel—eyes of a heavenly blue,
Features that shamed Apollo, hair of a golden hue;
The women simply adored him; his lips were like Cupid's bow;
But he never ventured to use them—and so they voted him slow.

Till at last there came One Woman, a marvel of loveliness,
And she whispered to him: "Do you love me?" And he answered that woman, "Yes."
And she said: "Put your arms around me, and kiss me, and hold me—so ——"
But fiercely he drew back, saying: "This thing is wrong, and I know."

Then sweetly she mocked his scruples, and softly she him beguiled:
"You, who are verily man among men, speak with the tongue of a child.
We have outlived the old standards; we have burst, like an over-tight thong,
The ancient, outworn, Puritanic traditions of Right and Wrong."

Then the Master feared for His angel, and called him again to His side,
For oh, the woman was wondrous, and oh, the angel was tried!
And deep in his hell sang the Devil, and this was the strain of his song:
"The ancient, outworn, Puritanic traditions of Right and Wrong."

We may call things by all the pleasant or repulsive names we will, but we shall not alter by one jot the established laws of the moral world which govern the development of the human race. Whatever advance mankind has made through the ages has been due to the observance of these unchanging laws. Individuals and nations alike have progressed when they have obeyed them. They have collapsed when they have broken them. The laws are still there whatever we may call them; their effects are inevitable, however we may seek to blink the truth. The discovery of and our readiness to obey natural law in the physical world have brought the wonderful advances that recent years have witnessed in every realm of applied science. Every scientist and most of the rest of us realize that we cannot trifle with these laws without inviting danger or actual destruction. Equally is this true in the moral realm. It is time that we recognized and admitted this truth. To ignore it is to invite ulti-

mate disaster for the individual and the civilization we now enjoy.

A close observer of youth cannot refrain from the belief that the softening influences of modern social life have already exercised a benumbing effect on youth. Those who deal at close range with the boys of our schools and colleges are agreed that the boy of to-day has far less inclination than had his predecessors to indulge in the "rough stuff" of undergraduate days. In one sense this is a real and desirable gain. The disappearance of much of the old-time lawlessness and meanness is an unquestioned gain; though the more modern and gentle "students' strike" lacks at least something of virility and romance. But much of the old-fashioned "horse play" of student days was altogether innocuous, while at times it indicated the presence in its perpetrators of a degree of initiative and originality not wholly uncommendable. I realize, however, that a difference of opinion prevails on this point,

and I have listened to many arguments pro and con. But if these modern influences are tending to undermine the vigor and enthusiasm with which youth throws itself into the normal and wholesome activities that properly belong to these younger days, argument is out of place. There are evidences, I think, that this has actually happened.

I chanced recently to be passing a Sunday at one of our well-known universities. It was in the early spring, the last Sunday before the close of the winter term. The previous day, a half-holiday for the students, had been one of those rare spring days in which a still distant summer suddenly injects itself into the midst of the bleakness of the passing winter and gives warning of its approach. The sun beat down hot and clear, and the students swung their coats over their arms and rolled up their shirt-sleeves as they strolled about the campus and the streets of the city.

At the breakfast-table that Sunday morning I chanced to meet an old acquaintance of college days, a famous baseball player of his time, and a graduate of this university. He drew me aside excitedly to tell me a unique and almost unbelievable story. On that alluring Saturday he had closed his desk and given up his business in order to get back to his college and help coach the varsity nine which was to start on its annual southern trip at the beginning of the spring vacation early in the following week.

"There's something radically wrong with the boys of to-day," he exclaimed heatedly. "Let me tell you what happened." It was clear that he found it difficult to control his feelings as he spoke. "You know what a wonderful day it was yesterday for baseball? Well, I went out to the field and donned my togs and waited for the team to show up. But they didn't come. After about an hour a lone individual appeared. I asked him what had become of the squad. He

replied that he understood that practice had been called off. ' Practice called off on a day like this,' I exclaimed; ' the first decent day you fellows have had out of doors this year, and the spring trip only a day or two ahead. That's impossible.' ' It is queer,' the youngster admitted, ' but I was told that a notice to that effect had been posted on the bulletin board.'

" That settled it for me," went on my irate friend. " I hastily dressed and went back to the campus. I found the bulletin board, and there, sure enough, signed by the captain himself, was the notice. After some difficulty I found the captain and demanded to know the reason for his unheard-of act. He looked a bit sheepish, and by way of explanation told me that one of the fraternities had given a dance the night before, that it had lasted till late into the morning hours, and that he knew the members of the team would be in no shape for practice."

My friend paused to wipe the sweat from his

brow, and then, raising his hands excitedly, fairly shouted: "I tell you it's a different brood! It's a different brood!"

That afternoon, at a fraternity tea, I received full confirmation of all that my friend had told me. And the interesting part of it, to me, was that the student body seemed to accept the thing as a perfectly natural and normal incident of college life.

Such an incident simply could not have happened only a few years back. The thing would never have been attempted in the first place. But had a varsity squad, or even individuals from that squad, dared to try it, the student body would have promptly seen to it that they were never again permitted to wear the uniform of the college, if indeed they would have been allowed to retain their places in the college community itself. Without doubt this may be regarded as a somewhat extreme and unusual illustration. But it clearly denotes a tendency, at least, which can-

not be avoided if youth is to continue to react in perfectly natural and normal ways to the softening influences of the social conditions with which it is surrounded.

For all this we cannot fairly blame youth. The reactions of youth are still normal, as they have ever been; the conditions which prompt these reactions to-day are not; and for these conditions not youth but the older generation is responsible.

PART SIX

DISCIPLINE VERSUS SELFISHNESS

"This truth comes to us more and more the longer we live, that on what field or in what uniform or with what aims we do our duty matters very little, or even what our duty is, great or small, splendid or obscure. Only to find our duty certainly, and somewhere, some way, to do it faithfully, makes us good, strong, happy and useful men, and tunes our lives into some feeble echo of the life of God."

—*Phillips Brooks.*

PART SIX

DISCIPLINE VERSUS SELFISHNESS

THE loss of discipline in home, and school, and society has been so steady and, in recent years, so appalling that to-day its influences are everywhere felt. One is unpopular who speaks of discipline in these days. It is not good form. This is an age, we are given to understand, when youth should develop in its own way, unhampered and unrestrained.

This pernicious doctrine has spread its roots in all directions, and these roots have gone in deep. It is hard to tell where this theory first started, but, wherever that may have been, its spread is everywhere in evidence. It runs counter to all the experiences of individual life and of the human race, to the plain teachings of history, to the testimony of all those who have achieved real

greatness and positions of true leadership. And yet it has its vociferous advocates everywhere. "To him that overcometh" used to be the inspiring slogan for a man's life. The reverse would appear to be true to-day.

We have already noted its effects within the home. Examine for a moment the teachings of modern pedagogy and the theories so rampant in modern school life. Note the catchwords that are so common and so gratifying to a generation immersed in pleasure, seeking material gain, and averse to all things irksome and restraining,—"self-expression," "self-realization," "self-determination." Where can we escape them? What their advocates persistently refuse to tell us is that in the last analysis these all spell Selfishness, and with a large "S."

That there is something good in this theory no one will dispute. That the emphasis is wrong should be evident to all. And yet our public schools have become almost experiment stations

for testing these absurd nostrums, and there are a growing number of private schools that thrive lustily upon them. If many of our self-appointed pedagogical experts could have their way, all schools, public and private alike, would be forced to enthrone this new and absolutely pernicious doctrine of education.

I have read the catalogues of some of these schools, and, when I have finished, I have been tempted to question my own sanity. The monstrous absurdities that are there set forth would be only absurd if they were not so readily accepted by gullible parents, and did not involve the character and future of the youth subjected to their influence. Easily satisfied and duty-shirking parents are captivated by assurances that their promising boys and girls are unfolding under such influences into wonderfully beautiful human flowers. They have been led to believe that through these newly discovered methods of education the old Adam has been completely

eliminated from the human child, and that nothing less than an angel may be counted on for the days ahead.

I received a letter recently from one of these schools in which a picture of this kind of product is given me, and, apparently, in good faith. This is what the headmaster writes:

> "As I wrote you before, the boy is very sound morally and very superior intellectually. His father once asked me what I could find to correct in him, and I could suggest only a slight hesitancy in speech and a tendency to cock his head on one side when speaking close to a person."

If this is the description of a normal boy, I fail to recognize it. Fortunately I have not been called on to deal with that kind. I hope I never may be. I wouldn't know what to do with him. My first impulse, I think, would be to teach him to steal or commit murder or do something desperate that would at least give me reason to believe that he was human. Kipling must have had some such boy in mind when he wrote:

"Angels may come for you, Willie, my son,
But you'll never be wanted on earth, dear."

Frankly, I don't believe that the boy in question was ever exactly as painted by his admiring principal. If the principal's statement is true, it is certainly fair to ask whether there may not have been something radically wrong with the environment of a school to which the reactions of a perfectly wholesome, normal boy would exhibit only inconsequential and silly mannerisms. Surely the prospects of a virile, rugged, and manly character in maturer years for a boy of that type would be dark indeed.

This tendency to extreme individualism and glorification of self, which has developed in conjunction with the loss of discipline, is not limited to the home and school. It is rampant to-day in all phases of our social, civic, and economic life. Individuals and groups alike are more and more concerned about themselves and their fancied privileges and grievances and with steadily

lessened thought of their obligations to society as a whole. The classic expression of an old-time railroad magnate, "The public be damned," represents an all-too-common attitude of mind in these later days. Woman shouts for her "rights"; labor joins the chorus and clamors for the same somewhat indefinable thing; and the sterner sex, not to be outdone, screams for its "personal liberties." Seldom, in all this noisy turmoil, do we hear the inspiring words "duty," "service," "sacrifice,"—words which were ever in the minds and constantly on the tongues of those who laid the foundations and builded so well the lower structure of our national life. And yet happiness, the pursuit of which we acknowledge as an inalienable right, and the avowed aim of all those who raise this boisterous turmoil, has never yet been found where these words are lacking in the thoughts of men.

General Robert Lee, in those immortal words which have become an American classic, voiced

for all true and patriotic Americans the spirit of the founders and builders of this great republic when he said, "Duty is the sublimest word in the English language." The modern invitation, so freely extended to the youth of to-day, to seek its satisfactions in selfish indulgence is in marked and painful contrast to the sterling advice given by this same great American to his son. He writes:

> "I know that wherever you may be placed, you will do your duty. That is all the pleasure, all the comfort, all the glory we can enjoy in this world."

Duty involves service for others and not for self. Self-expression and self-determination, on this sound basis, are realized only and always by the investment of one's self and one's talents in the welfare of the community. And this cannot be done without facing constantly the exacting demands of discipline.

It is this unwillingness of the present genera-

tion to face discipline, to deny itself anything that for the moment pleases, even when that denial ministers to the welfare of society,—that is responsible for much of the present-day unrest. The passing whim, the personal interest, the selfish ambition,—these must have the right of way. If the needs of the community and the welfare of society as a whole can later find a place, well and good. If not, let them pass.

Unfortunately this purely selfish and unpatriotic attitude of mind is not limited to those who lack vision and opportunity. Nowhere is it more strikingly in evidence than among those who, through birth and privilege, have been permitted to fill positions of leadership and responsibility. From these high sources widespread and demoralizing influences are flowing which offer an open and alluring invitation to those of weaker minds and wills to realize their distorted visions and unworthy ambitions. Prompted by the same selfish motives the robber collects his

loot and the gunman murders his helpless victim. And plastic youth, bewildered and perplexed, is the greatest sufferer of all.

I chanced to be sitting, at a banquet just after the close of the war, beside that peerless American, Major-General Leonard Wood. As the tables were cleared and the speaking was about to begin the appearance of liquor was everywhere noted about the hall. Turning to me, in very evident distress of mind, the general said, "Is this a sample of the college dinners of the present day?"

"I am sure I don't know," was my reply. "College dinners were not held during the war, and before that time liquor had become unpopular and had practically disappeared on such occasions."

For a few moments the general watched the increasing flow of the law-forbidden beverage. Then he turned to me again, and, with intense feeling, said: "Don't these men know that they

are defying the constitution of their country? Don't they realize that they are trampling its flag under their feet? Why, these are educated men, those to whom we look for ideals and leadership, those on whom we must lean to ward off anarchy and chaos! Can't they see that by their actions they are breeding more Bolsheviks and anarchists than all the 'reds' and radicals in the slums and on the streets can possibly create? I can't understand it," he went on, "and I would not have believed it possible if I had not witnessed it with my own eyes."

General Wood's statements are altogether true. The censure was deserved. But that which, in those early days of prohibition, was something of a novelty has become a commonplace to-day. No sane person believes that this government of ours can stand unless supported by a law-abiding citizenship. But no sane person can honestly expect that the manhood of tomorrow, surrounded as it is to-day in its plastic

youth by such influences as these, will entertain even a passing respect for the law and the constitution of the land.

In all the multifarious phases of our modern life, where the effects of this self-centered attitude and unwillingness to recognize proper responsibilities to others are so painfully apparent, nowhere, I think, has there been a greater loss to our boys than in that phase which belongs to woman. As my contacts have been chiefly with boys may I offer a special plea in their behalf at this point.

The changes which have taken place of late in woman's realm, and by which her horizon has been so greatly enlarged and her activities so widely increased, have changed significantly the character of society. Woman has gained much by these changes, much that is deserved, much that was long overdue. That much all of us must frankly admit. But with the gains there have come losses, unnecessary perhaps, but in the

realm of boyhood, at least, very real and very greatly to be deplored.

Throughout the passing years the sanctity attaching to the name of woman has been a priceless possession of the youth of the sterner sex. Its influence has proved always a restraint on ignoble action, a check on unworthy impulse and desire, and a stimulus to chivalry and idealism,—those choicest qualities of youth in the history of the world's civilization. Again, the influence is hard to define. But to those who can, for the moment, put themselves back into the days of their own boyhood my meaning will be clear. Whether rightly or wrongly we looked on woman as an ideal, as an inspiration, as a challenge; something set apart from the ordinary dirt and dust of the world to guide and inspire us; something that steadied and strengthened us in our hardest fights in those days when we were struggling for self-control and manhood. Sometimes it was womankind as a whole, sometimes an in-

dividual over whose head we had set our boyish halo; but always the influence was there; wholesome, strong, uplifting, it stood between us and the unworthy deed we were tempted to do. It drove from our minds the base thoughts that so frequently showed their ugly heads. It urged us to place in complete control the best that was in us. It stood as an ever-present challenge to all that was noble but so often concealed.

It is hard to believe that our boys to-day can find in their friends of the other sex the old-time inspiration and appeal. If in her change of social status woman has lost those qualities and characteristics that in all ages have been an inspiration to chivalry and high manhood, the loss is irreparable. Once let our boys believe that woman is not worthy of their confidence, their respect, and their reverence, we shall search in vain for anything that can make good the loss. That something has been lost already, is clear. How far any gains will offset this loss will not

perhaps be apparent until those who are boys and girls to-day shall have become the men and women of to-morrow.

To what extent that influence is appreciated by the representatives of the other sex I am not prepared to say. But that its existence was resented by any had never occurred to me until very recently. I had supposed that women gloried in it. Their actions seemed to lend color to this belief. But as one of the older generation I fear that I am no longer competent to form opinions about the modern representatives of the other sex.

A city newspaper was once rash enough to print something I had said on this subject before a local college club. Several days later I received a unique and somewhat remarkable letter from a very modern lady, who took me sharply to task for my remarks, and told me in plain and emphatic language how thoroughly incompetent she considered me to discuss the subject. Parts

of this interesting letter deserve wider publicity, and I venture, therefore, to give them to my readers.

"It is impossible a man of your age," she writes, "should be unaware that the gorgeous bloom of social immorality you deplore, and which the returning young soldier beholds with astonishment, is the blossom and fruit of a plant of age-long growth. Why did you not point out, my dear Doctor, that the trouble is not so much a lack of religion, but rather the dawning of that inevitable day of which warning was given many centuries ago: 'Whatsoever a man soweth that also shall he reap.' Remember the promise: 'Give and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over.' Bear in mind that a great writer once uttered the truth when he wrote: 'The whirligig of time brings in its revenges.' You and your audience faced the fulfilling of those promises.

"Why did you not tell those boys that the root of the troubles lay in the fact that their fathers ate sour grapes throughout the ages and for that reason their teeth are now on edge? Why did you not address them after this fashion: 'The men built up, for their own pleasure and profit, laws unjust to women,—standards and habits and customs unjust to women. This has been a man-made world, and run for the benefit of the men. They sowed the wind; you, my young friends,

and I stand by, and experience the force of the inevitable whirlwind.' I cannot see that men to-day, on the whole, are inwardly much better, or much worse, than were their forebears. There is ever a fashion in morals, as in hats or coats. This present spell you deplore is a woman's revolution. Unless you care to emulate Canute of old, the best advice I have to offer is to await the passing of this righteous hurricane, and trust that the promise, 'At eventide it shall be light,' may be fulfilled.

"A great deal goes to make up the girl of the period, and to explain her raison d'être, besides her short skirt, cigarette case, painted face, and lack of restraint. The evolution of the face-mask our great-grandmothers wore, so that their faces might not be deprived of their marketable value, is the short skirt and the rolled stocking.

"If the girls unduly seek pleasure and diversion, remember the dull, deadly monotonous, dreary drabness of the lives of generations of women from whom they descended. Had the centuries held for them less jam-making and fewer children, and more fox-hunting, cock-fighting, rat-baiting, and gambling, the movies, dancing, and hundreds of enticing pleasures would not to-day prove so alluring to their descendants. If those St. Paul terms 'the weaker vessels' had partaken of the fine Burgundy, rum, and Madeira imported for the sole consumption of paterfamilias, and at times joined him beneath the dining-room table, possibly your young sol-

dier . . . might not now be deploring 'the number of girls under its influence to-day.' . . . You say of influence: 'I mean parents who are ready to make sacrifices.' Throughout the ages the mother has been an eternal sacrifice to her husband, her children, and her home. If she is so no longer, she is in a state of rebellion. Something age-long has occasioned it. Metaphorically speaking, she puts on her hat evenings and goes out 'to the lodge.' You speak of parents"—I think she meant to say "men"—"who have a belief in the modesty and purity of womankind as a whole, and say: 'Those are the things we anchor to, and you know that we cannot anchor to those things to-day as we used to.' Possibly not, and I think I can tell why. The women are tired of having the men anchor to their purity, and place their hope of heaven in woman's skirts. . . . The root of the evil called 'divorce' Adam planted in the Garden of Eden. Divorce is a symptom not a disease. In the good old days of the religious home . . . laws and customs favored immorality; the Church winked at it, and preached the subjection of woman. I might remark in passing that the woman of to-day and St. Paul are slightly out of harmony. Mary to-day places her erring spouse on the curbstone and shuts the matrimonial door. She thereby adjusts her own score, and incidentally that of generations of her female forebears. Do you blame her if she seeks a steadier anchor, indulging in what Dr. Johnson calls 'the triumph of hope over experience.'

"The Bible, my dear Dr. Stearns, must be revised and reinterpreted, if you expect response from the girl of to-day. The mosaic ox and ass, as compabuibs, make scant appeal. St. Paul's theories concerning woman, her relation to man and the Church, are out of date. Woman is the keynote of the situation. Had I addressed that ——— Club, those boys would have heard a number of wholesome truths and without any sugar coating."

I have read this interesting letter many times. It contains a wealth of food for serious thought. The writer has convictions, and the commendable courage to defend them. I am told that she enjoys the reputation of being something of a leader in the feminist movement of the present day. Whether this is so or not, she undoubtedly gives voice to the feelings and beliefs of those who to-day are vigorously championing that cause. For that reason, if for no other, her contentions should be studied. She signs herself "Mrs." She is a wife then; perhaps, a mother.

My first reaction on reading this unusual document was one of unfeigned amusement. But

while the smile still lingered there flashed across my mind in arresting contrast the picture of a mother I had known of the older, and now somewhat discredited, generation.

She was born on a New Hampshire farm, this old-fashioned girl, where she grew up close to nature and in daily contact with the " dull, deadly monotonous, dreary drabness " of the life of the mother who bore her, and of that of her women friends. It was an old-fashioned home, with many children. " Cock-fighting, rat-baiting, and gambling," for some reason, had not yet become a part of the family régime to broaden the vision of woman and free her from age-long shackles; and the " weaker vessels " seemingly had no opportunity or desire to " join paterfamilias beneath the dining-room table " after partaking of " fine Burgundy, rum, and Madeira." A careful perusal of the family records brings to light no evidence that the mother in this old-time home was accustomed to " put on her hat evenings and

go out to the lodge," either for her own amusement or for the sake of "adjusting her own score" or "that of generations of her female forebears." Nor is there in the record any suggestion that this sadly unenlightened mother found in her "eternal sacrifice to her husband, her children, and her home" anything more than a God-given privilege and joy.

Yet in spite of these frightful handicaps the young girl grew up, and seemingly into a young womanhood of beauty and charm. At least so thought a young and adventurous-spirited fellow from a neighboring city who sought and won her hand, and who, a year or two later, carried her away to the home he had prepared for her in far-away and Sunny India.

Wealth and success came rapidly to this happy couple, and, with them, that which they counted their greatest joy of all, an old-fashioned family of seven children. The home, presided over and graced by the presence of a hostess to whom had

been denied the privilege of living at " the dawning of that inevitable day of which warning was given many centuries ago," became the center of the social and intellectual life of the Far Eastern city on the outskirts of which it was located. British viceroys, army and navy officers from many lands, distinguished travelers, native rajahs and princes,—all found in that home a friendly welcome and passed many happy hours within its walls. David Livingstone, the great explorer, made it his headquarters before his memorable departure into the African wilderness.

The mistress of this home cherished warmly a belief, translated into daily thought and action, in old-fashioned religion. For her the " Bible " had neither been " revised " nor " reinterpreted." In it she found all that she desired to guide in daily life, to comfort in time of sorrow, and to strengthen in moments of adversity. In spite of the many interests of her active life her thoughts were always and chiefly of those children which

she counted her greatest blessing. And in those days of material prosperity, while yet no cloud dimmed the financial skies, daily on her knees she prayed to her heavenly Father that if the wealth with which she had been so signally blessed might work some later harm on the characters of her children it should be taken away.

How strangely must such a prayer fall on the ears of our modern world!

And at length the clouds did gather. Higher and blacker they piled than even this brave and unselfish mother could have dreamed. Within the brief space of a few weeks fortune, and the husband and father too, had gone from her life. But faith and courage were equal to the great test. With superb heroism the stricken mother turned her back on the old life and scenes, and, with unshaken trust in the wisdom of Almighty God, faced the new and unknown future.

A brief experience as a teacher in earlier days prompted her to open a private school for girls.

To give her children, the youngest still a baby, the education which, in the days of prosperity, had been planned for them, was her absorbing ambition. Year after year she labored for the accomplishment of this unselfish aim. Sacrifice was her daily lot, and the stern discipline of an exacting world faced her at every turn. One after another four of the children for whom she struggled were taken from her, and in the prime of their lives. But she never wavered, this old-fashioned mother, nor lost her faith that all was well. To the world she held her head as high as ever; and to her friends and family she was still the same inexhaustible source of strength and comfort and cheer. And after twenty-five years of ceaseless effort she had completed her seemingly impossible task.

The " state of rebellion " in which the modern woman would have us believe true happiness can alone be found, was never dreamed of by this mother of whom I write; yet she fairly radiated

happiness wherever she went. Her children, knowing well where and when the springs of her deep humor could best be uncovered, would sometimes twit her good-naturedly over her unpardonable offence in failing to consult them personally before asking the Almighty to take away the inheritance that would have been theirs. Then merriment would dance from those eyes, and the lips would twitch with uncontrollable mirth. The worthless scion of some wealthy home would be pictured in language that left nothing to the imagination, and the protesting children would be assured that this would doubtless have been their fate had not a far-seeing Providence interfered in their behalf. As life's sunset drew near, the faith that had never deserted her seemed to burn with an ever-brightening flame, the courage that had sustained when life's road was roughest increased in strength, the humor still flashed from dimming eyes, and the happiness, which had always been so radiantly

hers, catching now the rich coloring of the evening skies, reflected the unseen but brighter glories of another world.

Perhaps an "old fogy" may be pardoned for suggesting that in such a contrast as this there is something still to be said for the old-fashioned woman of an earlier day. Such mothers there still are, God bless them! But they are not those who fill the air with noisy clamor about "rights" and "privileges"; not those who shun life's discipline and shrink from sacrifice; not those to whom "self-expression" means only the indulgence of selfish desires and the gratification of personal whims. If the modern woman, freed from what she regards as the shackles of the former days, can still give us mothers of the old heroic kind, we shall rejoice with her in her new-found freedom and still render her the homage that chivalry prompts. If she cannot or does not, whatever may be her personal gain, civilization will have lost something for which no other com-

pensation will suffice. And youth will have lost its noblest inspiration and its strongest support.

In one of his well-known war stories Private Pete has put into gripping words the feelings of reverence and adoration which the youth of the sterner sex, in the deepest recesses of the heart, has always cherished towards women: "Out to France we go for Flag and Country. Over the top we go for Mother. And 'mother'—that one simple word—embraces the whole of womanhood."

PART SEVEN

CONCLUSION

"Who sleeps beneath yon bannered mounds,
The proudly sorrowing mourner seeks,
The garland-bearing crowd surrounds?
A light-haired boy with beardless cheeks!
'Tis time this fallen world should rise:
Let youth the sacred work begin!
What nobler task, what fairer prize
Than earth to save and Heaven to win?"

PART SEVEN

CONCLUSION

A DISTRACTED world calls loudly today for leadership. It has not prospered of late under the guidance of an older generation, and it looks to youth, with its undimmed visions and potential power, to set it right.

A friend of mine who returned not long ago from Italy has described in vivid language an experience which he had there soon after the close of the Great War. He was present at a great meeting in an opera house in a large Italian city. The distinguished educator and philosopher, Giovanni Gentile, was addressing the audience. He was pleading for higher moral standards for his nation. He spoke with feeling of the seeming breakdown of those moral standards that had

governed in the past, and the dimming of those ethical and spiritual ideals in which alone stability was to be found. He asked for nobler living and clearer thinking, for the maintenance of finer honor and truer justice in the relations of individuals and in those of the nations of the world. As he spoke he apparently noticed on the faces of some of his audience expressions denoting cynicism and doubt. For a moment he paused and his face showed the intensity of his feelings. Raising his hands aloft and with dramatic earnestness, he cried: "I am not speaking to the older generation. The mind of the older generation has broken down. I make my appeal to youth, and youth will hear and answer me."

He was right. Youth will hear and answer, and gladly, as it has always done if the appeal is clear and strong and high.

The war gave us evidence enough of this truth. Here in America we had constant illustrations. It was youth that first saw the real issues at

stake. It was youth that caught the first vision of a needy and distressed humanity calling loudly for help. It was youth that first sensed the truth—that justice and honor and righteousness were the stakes in that great contest. Youth did not stop to count the cost. Youth offered everything, even its life, that the great and necessary end might be attained for humanity. It was the older generation that quibbled and questioned. It was the older generation that sought security in the cowardly answer of Cain of old, "Am I my brother's keeper?" It was the older generation that tried to hide itself in the shadows of its own selfish complacency, and answered, like Adam in the Garden, "I was afraid and went and hid myself." It was the older generation that shrank from the thought of personal and material and national loss. The early call of duty awakened faint response in the hearts of those of maturer years. It found its prompt and courageous answer in the heart of youth.

Youth is still endowed with the heroic spirit it has always known, nor does it need the crisis of some great world war to awaken that spirit to action. It accepts the challenge in daily life, if only the challenge is vigorous and its real meaning clear. It will not hesitate and it will not shirk when once assured that the call to action is the divine call of duty. It will respond in a crisis as those brave Yale boys did at the New Haven fire, and it will respond, too, in the more obscure activities of common life. Though the service demanded may require the sacrifice of life itself, it will answer bravely and cheerfully in the words of Allen Keith, "I have no regrets."

Many incidents in my own experience come to my mind as I ponder on this theme, some commonplace, some unusual, but all testifying in unmistakable terms to the presence in youth of clear visions and the readiness to realize those visions if given a fair chance. Once the path has been chosen, youth will outstrip us in the race for the

goal. It will shame us, too, in its readiness to invest its all.

Several years ago it seemed wise to the authorities of my school to abolish altogether dances under the school roof. The extravagances and eccentricities which had so rapidly and strangely developed in this ordinarily pleasant pastime had become so pronounced as to make it clear that only drastic measures could check them and restore normalcy. For two years the ban held. Criticisms and complaints and petitions for restoration were many, and, at times, emphatic. Finally there came a time when it seemed wise to test the boys themselves.

It happened that those who would naturally be in charge at the time comprised a group of fellows of unusual poise and strength of character. We had several conferences. I had made up my mind that until the boys admitted the true character of the dangers involved I would give them no inkling of my attitude. The point desired

was finally reached; with perfect candor the boys admitted even more than I was ready to grant myself. Then they took an interesting position. They argued, and convincingly, that no one stood in a better position than they themselves to apply needed remedies. "If we can run a dance to your complete satisfaction," they said, "and can prove to ourselves as well that the thing can be done, isn't the undertaking worth while? Won't we be in a position also to help straighten things out in college and in society as the result of our test?"

This seemed the time to act. Somewhat to their surprise, I announced myself ready to grant the request and to place squarely on their shoulders the full responsibility. For a moment they were a bit disconcerted, for they had expected help and guidance from me. I told them frankly that I preferred to leave the matter in their hands, but, at their request, I agreed to check over with them in advance any regulations which

they might deem essential. A day or two later they presented to me a paper which they had carefully prepared, and in which they had outlined in detail the rules which they proposed to enforce. As I first glanced at them it was difficult to retain self-control. Later in the evening, after the boys had left, I sat down in the quiet of my study and made free use of my blue pencil. Frankly, if I had undertaken myself to prepare and enforce such regulations as those submitted, I should have invited a riot. The boys had outdone me, and by a wide margin.

The dance was held; the regulations were enforced to the letter. The committee themselves took no part in the actual dancing, so eager were they to carry the affair through to a successful conclusion. Again and again during the evening they would slip to my corner of the room and ask if I had any criticisms to offer. I had none. Parents who were present, many of whom had come from long distances and were thoroughly

familiar with the character of dancing in various parts of the country, assured me that if they had not witnessed it with their own eyes, they would not have believed it possible for a dance to be conducted as was this one. When the affair was over, boys and girls alike united in acclaiming it the best dance they had ever attended.

Incidents like this are common in the life of every headmaster. To me, personally, the experience was one of the most gratifying I have ever known; nor was its influence limited, for from several sources since that time I have heard of similar activities on the part of these same boys to whom had been brought home the realization that they had accomplished something actually needed and distinctly worth while.

It might not be out of place here, in view of earlier remarks that have been made on the value of discipline, to note the fact that the boy in charge, and on whom the chief responsibility rested, had three years before been suspended

from the school for a violation of school regulations. At the time his father had entered a vigorous protest against the severity of our action. In this particular case the boy, with greater sense and vision than his parent, had protested in the latter's presence against the plea for clemency. He had accepted the situation like a man, and it had given the final touch to that stability of character which had made him, at the close of his school course, one of the most influential factors in the student life, and one of the most dependable boys on whom it has ever been my privilege to lean.

Youth sometimes challenges us under conditions which startle us and shame us into a sense of our failure to appreciate potential power and our inability to recognize how close to the surface, even under most adverse conditions, lies that ever-present spiritual vision so eager and ready to find its realization in the ordinary activities of daily life. A striking example of this has taught

me more than all the other experiences of my years as a schoolmaster.

A few years before the Great War a young fellow entered the school fresh from the environment of a small New England mill town. His parents had come to this country from England when he was but a little chap, and had been mill-workers all their lives. Limited from necessity in their own education, they had definite ambitions for their children. Learning that he could work his way through the school, the boy had come to us prepared to undertake the task. He stayed with us three years, developing in the meantime a distinct talent in English literature. He entered Brown University and there displayed still further gifts of this same character, until, at the close of his course, he was deemed worthy to be called back to his college as an instructor in English literature. While he was serving in this capacity war was declared, and he was one of the first to enlist. Shortly after his

arrival in France, and while serving as a lieutenant, he met a gallant death in action.

Not many weeks later the father called to see me, and to secure the boy's diploma which had been left in our keeping. As we walked down across the campus late one afternoon, we paused under the shadows of an elm tree, and the father, with deep feeling, unburdened his heart to me. " You know, Mr. Stearns," he said simply, " the loss of that boy means more to us than others can ever understand. I suppose all parents would say that," he added apologetically, " but in Egbert's case it *is* different, and I will tell you why.

" You know when he was in school how he developed a love for English literature. Gosh, how he did love his Shakespeare! Well, he used to come home Saturday nights to spend the week-ends with us, and he would come bounding into the room where we were sitting, smoking and gossiping and whiling away the time with our friends, and he would almost shout, ' Oh, I want

you to hear this great passage I found in Shakespeare this week.' Not many of those people knew much about Shakespeare," said the old man with a touch of humor, "and the prospect of listening to a passage from Shakespeare did not appeal very much to them. Some were a bit restless and some were ready to leave; but Egbert wouldn't have it. He would laugh and say, 'No, you can't go; you have got to hear this passage and you are going to like it.' And then he would read to them.

"And so it went from week to week. Always he would come home, bounding into the room and eager to read them a passage from the Shakespeare that he loved. And by and by they didn't show any more restlessness. Pretty soon others began to drop in, and, before the year was over, the room would be crowded on Saturday nights, waiting for Egbert to come home and read them Shakespeare. Gosh," said the father fervently, "it was great.

"And then he went to Brown University and there he developed a love for Browning, just as he had developed in school his love for Shakespeare, and again he would come home for the week-ends, and, bounding into the room as before, he would say, 'Oh, I want you to hear this wonderful passage I found in Browning coming up on the train from Providence to-day.'" The father chuckled. "Browning was pretty stiff," he said, "for that crowd, and the old restlessness once more appeared; but, just as before, Egbert wouldn't stand for that, and he would say, 'No, you have got to stay and hear it, and you are going to like it, just as you did the Shakespeare.' And then the same thing happened as before; the restlessness disappeared; more neighbors drifted in; and, before the year was over, the room would be crowded, and all waiting for Egbert to come home and read them Browning."

The old man paused for a minute. Then, with the tears starting in his eyes and with dramatic

intensity, he lifted his hands towards the sky and said, "Mr. Stearns, that boy just lifted us up into a world we had never known before. Gosh, but it was great!"

This incident has been constantly in my thoughts. And the more I have pondered on its deep significance the more strongly have I become convinced that Egbert Tetley, still a youth and blessed with the visions of youth, has pointed out the path, and the only path we can tread in security, along which we are bound to go if the present-day unrest among the masses is to be permanently quelled. However much the laboring man may clamor for a better living, the inarticulate cry which springs from the depths of his being is, after all, a cry not for a better living but for a better life; and that life is found not in the realms of the material world but in the realms of the spirit. "Society," says Aristotle, "originates in the need of a livelihood, but it exists for the sake of life." Our modern world has placed

all the emphasis on living. That emphasis must be changed.

The comment of a prominent member of the Workingman's Party in England on the description of "The Athenian Constitution" by Thucydides has deep significance. Of that classic constitution of an ancient democracy, the Greek philosopher writes:

"Our Constitution is named a democracy because it is in the hands not of the few but of the many. But our laws secure equal justice for all in their private disputes, and our public opinion welcomes and honors talent in every branch of achievement, not for any sectional reason but on grounds of excellence alone. And as we give free play to all in our public life, so we carry the same spirit into our daily relations with one another. We have no black looks or angry words for our neighbor if he enjoys himself in his own way, and we abstain from the little acts of churlishness which, though they leave no mark, yet cause annoyance to those who note them. Open and friendly in our private intercourse, in our public acts we keep strictly within the control of law. We acknowledge the restraint of reverence; we are obedient to whomsoever is set in authority and to the laws, more especially to those which offer protection to

the oppressed and those unwritten ordinances whose transgression brings admitted shame."

And the English workingman, voicing the deep-seated longing of the human heart, says:

"I believe that it is this great Hellenic spirit consciously or unconsciously seeking expression which is the cause of the great industrial unrest of this and other lands; we are not covetous for the rich man's gold or land, only in so far as we realize that they are the economic bases of life; and it is life that we want, full, rich, free, and many-sided."

Perhaps a schoolmaster who is privileged to come in contact with such incidents as that related above may be excused if he rebels with some heat at the kind of intellectual and moral food we are offering our boys and girls in these modern days. They ask for bread and we give them a stone. They are hungry for meat and we offer them offal. The sugar coating with which we conceal the poison within will not prevent that poison from doing its deadly work. Those who are willing, through the medium of

the printed page, the stage, the selfish home, and the lax social life of the time, to cater, for their material gain or personal comfort, to the weaker instincts of our boys and girls are selling their souls, and for a frightful price. And those who fail to recognize the presence in youth of those higher and finer and spiritual desires are blind and ignorant. It is to the youth of to-day that the reforms of to-morrow, so sadly needed by a distracted world, must be entrusted.

Youth to-day is restless. All over the world are to be found evidences of this fact. The attempt of the older generation to straighten out, on oft-tried and unworthy bases, the world chaos resulting from the war, jars badly with youth's idealism. The intangible verities of life which inspired youth to take up arms are now inspiring him to offer himself and his talents that those same and spiritual verities may be placed in permanent control. Never has youth faced a greater opportunity; and never has youth needed more

sadly the wise counsel and guidance born only of experience. At heart youth knows this; but the counsel and guidance it desires do not seem to be coming just now from the older generation, who alone are qualified by experience to give it.

Those who believe that youth, because it has vision and ideals, is capable of accomplishing this Herculean task without the help supplied by the experience of the human race and the aid of its elders are as blameworthy as those who refuse to recognize the inherent possibilities of youth. Youth is receiving noisy and constant advice and admonition to-day, and youth is naturally bewildered. It could hardly be blamed should it in despair seek to choose and follow a path of its own making. If it does, it will not be from preference.

A clergyman, long known for erratic and radical utterances, has recently added his voice to the discordant chorus. If correctly quoted, he has said, " To defy the counsels of the older genera-

tion, to act in a spirit of rebellion against constituted and respectable authority is the first duty of youth." And to make his meaning clearer this champion of lawlessness would include the authority and wise counsel even of parents.

But this is not the cry of youth. We must not confuse youth with infancy. This is the petulant cry of babyhood. Youth will recognize it as such and will not heed it.

Youth must and will retain its visions; it must realize them in the great world in which it is called upon to play its part. These visions must be kept clear and compelling, but youth must keep its feet on the ground. "Idealism," some one has wisely said, "is a mighty good thing, but even aeroplanes have little wheels on them so that they can run on the ground when necessary." Youth cannot safely break with the past. It cannot ignore the teachings of history. It cannot part with human experience. It must see for itself the pitfalls that human progress has always

encountered in its path. It must recognize the elements that have contributed to human success. It must profit by all that the world has taught the passing generations of mankind, and it must frankly acknowledge the abiding presence of unchanging moral law.

"The dangerous age," says an editorial writer in one of our daily newspapers, "is no longer twenty-one but forty." To-day youth challenges the older generation. What answer are we to give to that challenge? Our first duty clearly is to readjust our own bearings, reëstablish, if they are no longer there, in our own lives the old and tested standards of human conduct, accept again and gladly, for the welfare of ourselves and of society, the dictates of moral and civil law, find our true and finest self-realization in the service of society, and acknowledge our need of and dependence upon Almighty God. Once we have revamped our individual lives the distressing conditions in the social world will disappear. Then

and only then shall we be prepared to issue our challenge for which youth to-day waits. Home and school and Church must unite, that our call may be clear and loud and easily understood. And the call must be that of a moral and spiritual, not a material, idealism; for only such a call will youth understand, and to only such a call will youth respond.

That call must come to-day.

"Why worry about the boys?" said a friend with whom I had been discussing the incident of the New Haven fire. "The boys are all right." Yes, the boys are all right. But these boys will be men to-morrow. And we must not forget that it was the boys who played the heroes in that great crisis, the boys who still retained the visions and idealism of youth. The older generation, the men to whom the visions of youth were already lost, were fighting for their own worthless lives in those critical moments, and even at the expense of the lives of the weak and helpless whom they

trod under foot. It is the men and the women of to-morrow who demand our thoughts and our service to-day.

An incident in the career of Mr. Lloyd George, the British Prime Minister, related by a recent writer, seems to me to offer us a clue as to the character of the call we must issue to youth if we are to secure the response we seek.

It was in the early stages of the war. Co-ordination was everywhere lacking. Especially was this true among the manufacturers of ammunition. And this lack of coördination was costing the British government and the Allies untold wealth in lives and money, and threatening even to make possible an early victory for German arms. In this crisis the Prime Minister called a conference of the heads of all the munition factories in the United Kingdom. The critical situation was made clear. The compelling need of close and full coöperation was vigorously emphasized. The manufacturers were urged to

pool their interests, forget their rivalries and jealousies, and, for the common good, reveal their cherished trade secrets. But they stolidly declined. Their patriotism was appealed to, but with no better success. Even the clear explanation of threatened disaster to the cause of the Allies, and the inevitable destruction of the British Empire, left them unmoved. Hours of pleading accomplished nothing. Finally, when it seemed that nothing could undermine the selfishness of those who had the power to save or wreck the great cause, Mr. Lloyd George attacked them from a different angle and on another and a higher plane. Leaning forward over the table, and with that dramatic earnestness which has characterized him in great moments he said: " Gentlemen, have you forgotten that your sons at this very moment are being killed—killed in hundreds and thousands? They are being killed by German guns for want of British guns. Your sons, your brothers—boys at the dawn of

manhood! They are being wiped out of life in thousands! Gentlemen, give me guns. Don't think of your trade secrets. Think of your children. Help them. Give me those guns."

Before that moral appeal selfishness collapsed; material interests were forgotten; jealousies disappeared. Trade secrets were thrown upon the table, interests were pooled for the common good, and from that moment a steadily increasing supply of arms turned the tide of battle and assured final success to the Allied cause.

So our appeal to youth must be on the higher grounds of moral and spiritual values. After all, these are the values for which youth fought in the Great War, as it has fought for them in all times of crisis. These values it can comprehend. It will not willingly offer its strength and its life for the sordid values of materialism. But it will offer its all for the enduring verities of the Spirit. And youth needs only to be shown that the warfare for the preservation of these

spiritual verities is constant and as widespread as the human race. Hourly and everywhere this eternal struggle is waged. Youth should be in the thick of it, and would be, if the nature of that strife could only be made compellingly clear.

This then is our task, a sacred task too, and worthy of the best we can give it. We must not forget either that it is youth that has the greater stakes in the ultimate issue. And youth at heart is sound. Nor will youth refuse us its coöperation and support. In spite of the silly clamor of those who would have us believe that modern youth has unaccountably been endowed with some superhuman sense which gives it access to all the realms of wisdom denied in the past, and renders it innocuous to moral poisons, which, from the dawn of history, have worked their ills on humankind, youth still looks to those of age and experience to guide it in ways that human experience has proved to be wise and safe. In the days to come, when the responsibilities of

manhood and womanhood rest heavily upon its shoulders, youth will demand a reckoning from its elders. And youth will have no gratitude in its heart for those who, in the pursuit of their own selfish pleasures, have neglected the greater and more sacred task for the lack of which the solid satisfactions that properly belong to the years of maturity must ever be denied.

Youth has still its God-given visions of what life can and should be. Only as it realizes these visions in its later years will it find life, rich, and full, and free; and experience teaches us only too plainly that youth must have the help of its elders if it is to reach the high goal that these visions challenge it to seek. It is our duty and it is our privilege as well to face this task and accept this responsibility. We are not doing it to-day.

How to Find Your Rating as a Real Dad

The following chart is devised and recommended as a simple and very effective method of checking up one's successes and failures as a Dad

20 Points for Boy Knowledge and Helpful Home Influence

Maximum of

10 *points* For setting aside out of every week adequate time for participation in the boy's work, play, study, activities and interests.

5 *points* For having definitely studied the problems of boy life and development.

5 *points* For providing definite place and responsibility for the boy in the life of the home.

20 Points for Care of Mental Needs and Development of the Boy

5 *points* For providing a definite program of mental activity adequate for your boy (OUTSIDE of his regular school work).

5 *points* For personally carrying out a plan, in a thoroughly adequate manner, covering the matter of sex education.

5 *points* For providing simple shop, tools, necessary books and other simple equipment necessary to stimulate broad mental development.

5 *points* For arranging definite study time with the boy on suitable subjects.

20 Points for Care of the Physical Needs and Development of the Boy

5 *points* For providing a definite program of physical activity adequate for your boy.

5 *points* For having a specific plan in operation for the establishment of fundamental health habits.

5 *points* For an annual physical examination, including eyes and teeth.

5 *points* For personal participation with the boy in outdoor sports and games.

20 Points for Care of Spiritual Needs and Development of the Boy

5 *points* For providing a definite plan of spiritual activity and interest adequate for your boy.

5 *points* For encouraging, making possible, and participating WITH the boy in some definite service to others.

5 *points* For the regular conduct of any definite form of home worship and religious training.

5 *points* For, with reasonable regularity, personally accompanying the boy to some form of public worship.

20 Points for Care of Social Needs and Development of the Boy

5 *points* For providing a definite plan of social activity adequate for your boy.

5 *points* For success in making your home gang-headquarters.

5 *points* For a definite plan of home training in thrift and money matters.

5 *points* For a personal relationship to a gang of boys of which YOUR boy is a member.

Total Credits . . . . .

W. A. WILDE COMPANY, Publishers

Date Due

Ap 7 '38			
Ap 8 '38			
Ap 11 '38			
MAY 15 '51			
JAN 3 1997			
FEB 0 1 1997			
FEB 2 8 2009			